

Announcements from the New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain Urban Waters Partnership



<https://www.epa.gov/urbanwaterspartners/urban-waters-and-lake-pontchartrain-areanew-orleans-louisiana>

Dear New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain Urban Water Partners:

Below you will find an overview of the recent partnership meeting, National UW news (i.e., location updates, funding opportunities, upcoming events and trainings, and resources), a message from EPA Administrator Regan about EPA's draft Strategic Plan that is open for public comment, a report on climate change impacts to vulnerable communities, and some additional opportunities, resources, and news relevant to UW and the local partnership.

If you have opportunities or updates you would like to share with the partnership, please email them to [mcclain.colby@epa.gov](mailto:mcclain.colby@epa.gov).

Best,

Colby McClain  
Physical Science Student Trainee  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Gulf of Mexico Division  
Phone: 228-679-5885  
E-Mail: [mcclain.colby@epa.gov](mailto:mcclain.colby@epa.gov)

## **New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain UW Partnership Meeting**

As we know the Urban Waters (UW) Partnership reconnects urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among 15 federal agencies. The Partnership also collaborates with community-led revitalization efforts to improve our Nation's water systems and promote their economic, environmental and social benefits. Recall among the first locations established under the program was New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain, in part to further assist the location in post Hurricane Katrina recovery. Once again our community has been severely impacted, this time with Hurricane Ida. On September 30, a virtual partnership meeting was held with all local non-profit, city, parish, and federal partners to provide an


opportunity for them to share thoughts on where EPA and other federal partners could be more assistive in post Hurricane Ida cleanup and recovery.

We appreciate everyone’s participation and insights. We thank also EPA staff that were on hand as topic specialists to respond to your input: Eric Delgado of Emergency Response Team, Gloria Vaughn Environmental Justice Coordinator, Janie Acevedo of External Affairs, Colby McClain from the Gulf of Mexico Division, and Yeana Kwagh from HQ’s UW Program.



Pictured is Jeff Supak of Water Wise Gulf South and Yeana Kwagh of EPA HQ’s UW program Office, as UW Coordinator Randy Rush looks on.

## National Urban Waters News



**Please share this update with your partners and networks.** On a monthly basis, please send in updates related to your location, such as meetings, events, accomplishments, projects, partner updates and resources to [urbanwaters@michaeldbaker.com](mailto:urbanwaters@michaeldbaker.com). Should you have any specific requests,

questions or concerns related to your location, please contact Ryan Campbell at [rcampbell@michaeldbaker.com](mailto:rcampbell@michaeldbaker.com) and copy [urbanwaters@michaeldbaker.com](mailto:urbanwaters@michaeldbaker.com).

**Message of the Month:** On September 17, 2021, Arizona Senator Mark Kelly and EPA Administrator Michael Regan visited the Rio Reimagined Partnership along the Salt/Gila River Corridor (Tempe, Arizona). After a briefing with local leadership, federal and local policymakers participated in a walking tour across the Tempe Town Lake Pedestrian Bridge. The meeting focused on the Rio Reimagined Partnership's role in improving Arizona's water systems and economic opportunities. Senator Kelly is a cosponsor of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Act. To learn more about the visit, click [here](#).

**The next update will be circulated by November 19, 2021. Please send in updates related to your location by November 15, 2021.**

## SPOTLIGHT

**Eileen Takata, the Los Angeles River Ambassador in Los Angeles, California** shared the following:

**Location and sponsoring agency/organization:** The Los Angeles River is in Los Angeles County, California. Sponsoring agency: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Planning Division.

**Favorite part of the watershed:** The series of mini parks along the LA River Bikeway north of downtown Los Angeles; what I love is that they are unexpected along the urbanized river edge. The non-profit landscape architects that designed the parks included thoughtful touches such as native plants, recycled concrete walls and decomposed granite that could soak up a possible future overflow. Finally, I love the quirky, whimsical gates, fences and other installations designed by local artists.

**Current priorities:** Our priorities are environmental justice, strengthening the network and updating the workplan. For environmental justice, we are identifying problems and opportunities, getting to know communities' concerns, and addressing water inequities where possible. To strengthen the network, we're identifying potential workgroups. To update the workplan, we're updating objectives and identifying current projects that meet criteria in the workplan.

**Notable accomplishments:** We have strengthened the network this year by holding more frequent meetings.

**Project for discussion with ambassadors:** I'd like to talk to other Ambassadors about environmental justice and diversity, equity and inclusion activities and how the Urban Waters network can support disadvantaged communities.

## UPDATES FROM URBAN WATERS LOCATIONS

**Blue River (Kansas City, KS)** — Jill Erickson will be transitioning out as Executive Director of the Heartland Conservation Alliance and as the Urban Waters Ambassador effective November 1, 2021. Samuel Bennett will be the new Ambassador for the Blue River Urban Waters Partnership. Sam has 17 years of experience working with the William T. Kemper Foundation and a master's degree in

public administration. Urban Waters thanks Jill for her tremendous contributions to the program and wishes her the best in her next endeavor, and warmly welcomes Sam.

**Bronx River and Harlem Rivers (NYC, NY)** — The Bronx and Harlem River Watershed Partnership celebrated its tenth anniversary on Wednesday, October 13, 2021. Federal and local government officials and community organizations joined to celebrate the accomplishments of the Partnership.

**Bronx River and Harlem Rivers (NYC, NY)** — The Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds Partnership, in collaboration with the Urban Waters Learning Network, released a story map, Restoration and Resilience in NYC, about history of both rivers and the history and priorities of the Partnership. To view the story map, click [here](#).

**Caño Martín Peña (CMP) / San Juan (PR)** — On September 23, 2021, the San Juan Bay Estuary Program (SJBEP), one of the main partners of the CMP Partnership, was honored by the U.S. Water Alliance with the U.S. Water Prize 2021, recognizing the SJBEP as an Outstanding Non-Profit Organization.

**Caño Martín Peña (CMP) / San Juan (PR)** — The Puerto Rico Aqueduct and Sewer Authority (PRASA) and EPA will be hosting a workshop to discuss the Climate Resilience Evaluation and Awareness Tool (CREAT) and explore using the tool for reducing climate-related threats to utility operations and infrastructure on October 20, 2021. The webinar will focus on the impacts of drought on Caribbean Island water resources, show how assessments from CREAT can be used to bolster community support, and will include a demonstration of the tool.

**Delaware River Watershed/Greater Philadelphia (PA, NJ, DE)** — The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced the 41 grantees that received \$11.5 million in awards. Of the 41 projects, 32 were awarded through the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund in Delaware, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania, totaling \$9.52 million. Seventeen members of the Coalition of the Delaware River Watershed will complete 22 awarded projects.

**Lower Passaic River (NJ)** — The Lower Passaic River Urban Waters Partnership, in collaboration with the City of Newark's Sustainability Office, Newark Riverfront Revival and Wilderness Inquiry, offered community members the chance to paddle the Passaic River. The paddling event was held at Newark Riverfront Park from October 14-16, 2021.

**Los Angeles River (Los Angeles, CA)** — The Los Angeles River Urban Waters Partnership partners met on October 21, 2021, to share organizational and project updates.

**Middle Rio Grande (Albuquerque, NM)** — The Middle Rio Grande Partnership held its Partnership meeting on September 21, 2021. Apple Snider, Forest Service, presented on the State of Outdoor and Environmental Learning, a regional inventory of outdoor environmental learning initiatives, curricula and programs. Yeana Kwagh, EPA, presented on the Urban Waters Utilities and Water Equity Initiative. Dan McGregor, Bernalillo County, and Jaren Peplinski, Ambassador, presented on hosting an Urban Waters Ambassador. To view the inventory, click [here](#).

**Mystic River Watershed/Greater Boston (MA)** — The Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) gave program highlights and presented the Champion, Ripple and Volunteer of the Year Awards at the annual meeting on October 20, 2021. MyRWA recognized water quality volunteers for years of service

at the event. MyRWA is also scheduling education programs for schools and groups as part of their efforts to connect classroom content to place-based, real-world local ecological issues.

**New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain (LA)** — The New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain Partnership held a meeting on September 30, 2021, to share updates on how Hurricane Ida affected partners. EPA Region 6 staff from the Emergency Response program, Environmental Justice team and communications team attended the meeting. To learn more about EPA's response to Hurricane Ida, click [here](#).

**Northwest Indiana (IN)** — The Northwest Indiana Partnership held its meeting on October 14, 2021. Lynn Westphal, Ph.D. from the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station presented on Tales from the Future of Recreation on Public Lands. Peg Donnelly, EPA Water Division, gave an update on U.S. Steel releases and held a Q&A.

**Rio Reimagined – Salt / Gila River Corridor (Tempe, AZ)** — The Sierra Club released a ranking of the top sustainable colleges and universities. Arizona State University (ASU), a UWFP partner, was ranked number one. The ranking recognizes ASU's leadership in education, research and programming for sustainability. To view the rankings, click [here](#).

**Patapsco River (Baltimore, MD)** — The Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore released its annual report on the health of the Harbor on September 30, 2021, at an outdoor event at Bond Street Wharf. The theme of this year's annual report is Harbor Heartbeat. The report shows that Baltimore waterways are safer for swimming than they were last year and announced plans for a water trail. To view the report, click [here](#).

## FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENTS

**Economic Development Administration (EDA) American Rescue Plan Programs — Deadlines Vary** — Under the American Rescue Plan, EDA was allocated \$3 billion in supplemental funding to assist communities nationwide in the economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic and to build local economies that will be resilient to future economic shock. EDA investments will have a focus on underserved communities impacted by COVID-19 and there are six funding opportunities. To learn more about the funding opportunities, click [here](#).

**New! Forest Service Greening STEM Grant — October 31, 2021** — The Forest Service (FS) is collaborating with the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) to build the capacity of FS units to use NEEF's Greening STEM model to deliver STEM programming. This year, there is \$30,000 available to issue grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000 each for projects during the 2021-2022 academic school year. This competition is open to all Forest Service units, institutions that manage public lands within the State and Private Forestry network and partners. To learn more about this opportunity, click [here](#).

**New! Prevention Institute People, Parks, and Power Initiative — Letters of Intent due November 4, 2021** — The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Doris Duke Charitable Foundation are launching a joint effort managed by the Prevention Institute called People, Parks, and Power (P3). The P3 initiative will invest in green space, health equity, and racial justice by funding community-based organizations that work on public finance measures for parks and green infrastructures, assessment of park needs, community engagement with government agencies, anti-displacement protections, and more. The

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation will award up to \$500,000 over a 24-month grant period to up to 14 sites. Read more about eligibility requirements and the application [here](#).

**New! EJ4Climate Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Grant Program — November 14, 2021**

— The Commission for Environmental Cooperation, established by the governments of the United States, Mexico, and Canada, have launched the EJ4 Environmental Justice and Climate Resilience Grant Program. The program seeks to foster climate resilience by building communities' capacities to prepare for, respond to and recover from hazardous events or climate-related events. This grant supports underserved and vulnerable, and indigenous communities in Canada, Mexico and the United States by directly funding communities and community-based organizations to deliver environmental justice and advance local solutions to adapt to climate change. To learn more about eligibility and the application process, click [here](#).

**New! Recreation Economy for Rural Communities Planning Assistance — November 22, 2021 —**

EPA's Office of Community Revitalization, the USDA Forest Service, and the Northern Border Regional Commission invite applications for Recreation Economy for Rural Communities (RERC) planning assistance. Selected partner communities will work with a planning team to identify strategies to grow their local outdoor recreation economy, strengthen their downtown, and conserve and sustainably use forests and other natural assets. Any community in the United States is eligible and an informational webinar about the program will be on October 27, 2021, from 1:00-2:30 PM EST. To register for the informational webinar and learn more about the application, click [here](#).

**New! EPA's Clean Air Excellence Awards — Applications due November 30, 2021 —**

EPA is accepting applications for the 2022 Clean Air Excellence Awards Program. This program honors individuals and organizations whose efforts have helped to make progress in achieving cleaner air. The award recipients are selected for developing innovative, replicable and sustainable programs; serving as pioneers in their fields; and improving air quality either directly or indirectly through reduced emissions of criteria pollutants, hazardous air pollutants and/or greenhouse gases. Award recipients will be recognized by EPA at a ceremony held in Washington, D.C., in 2022. To learn about the awards and the application, click [here](#).

**New! Environment Education Local Grant Program — Applications due December 6, 2021 —**

EPA announced the availability of up to \$3 million in funding for locally-focused environmental education grants under the Environmental Education (EE) Local Grant Program. EPA will award grants in each of EPA's 10 Regions, for no less than \$50,000 and no more than \$100,000 each, for a total of 30-40 grants nationwide. EPA's Office of Environmental Education will host two webinars on how to write a competitive application and to address commonly asked questions related to the 2021 EE Local Grants Requests for Application. To learn more about EE Grants and the application, click [here](#).

**USDA Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program — Applications due January 10, 2022 —**

The Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), State and Private Forestry and Cooperative Forestry staff requests applications for this competitive grant program. The purpose of the program is to establish community forests by protecting forest land from conversion to non-forest uses and provide community benefits such as sustainable forest management; environmental benefits including clean air, water, and wildlife habitat; benefits from forest-based educational programs; benefits from serving as models of effective forest stewardship; and recreational benefits secured with public access. To learn more about eligibility and the application, click [here](#).



## EVENTS AND TRAININGS

**New! National Environmental Justice Advisory Council (NEJAC) Community Engagement Calls — October 26, 2021** — EPA invites the public to the virtual environmental justice community engagement calls, which are now biweekly. The next call will discuss Justice40 with a focus on EPA's Drinking Water and Clean Water State Revolving Funds. To register for the call, click [here](#).

**New! River Rally — June 4-7, 2022** — River Rally, the nation's largest annual conference for water professionals, is in-person for 2022. River Rally will be on the banks of the Potomac River in Washington, D.C., to mark the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. The River Rally 2022 program will feature speakers celebrating this and other clean water victories and center equity across all topics, while illuminating today's most urgent challenge: climate change. To view the save-the-date, click [here](#).

## RESOURCES

**USDA Forest Service Climate Adaptation Actions for Urban Forests and Human Health** — USDA Forest Service released Climate Adaptation Actions for Urban Forests and Human Health, a report which includes a menu of tangible, neighborhood-level options for using urban tree, forest and greening projects to reduce extreme temperatures and heat exposure. The actions presented can provide additional public health benefits by improving air quality, enhancing storm resilience and promoting mental health and social cohesion. The guide also provides local governments with advice on prioritizing the needs of disadvantaged communities and vulnerable populations. To view the report, click [here](#).

**White House Fact Sheet on Protecting Workers and Communities from Extreme Heat** — The Biden Administration launched an interagency effort to respond to extreme heat. The Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security and Agriculture; the Environmental Protection Agency; and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration announced a set of actions that will reduce heat-related illness, protect public health, and support the economy. This fact sheet summarizes the action plan. To view the fact sheet, click [here](#).

**Arizona State University Sustainable Cities Network Webinar on Climate Action Plan Basics** — Climate Action Plan Basics: Learning and Listening is an Arizona State University Sustainable Cities Network webinar that featured Rosanne Albright, Environmental Programs Coordinator for the City of Phoenix and Nicole Antonopoulos, the Sustainability Manager for the City of Flagstaff as panelists discussing climate mitigation and adaptation actions for an environmentally sustainable city. To view the webinar, click [here](#).

**U.S. Plastics Pact Roadmap to 2025** — The U.S. Plastics Pact is a collaborative consortium led by The Recycling Partnership and the World Wildlife Fund, launched as part of the Ellen MacArthur Foundation's global Plastics Pact network. The U.S. Plastics Pact released a roadmap to 2025 on how to achieve a circular economy for plastic packaging. To view the roadmap, click [here](#).



## Message from EPA Administrator Regan – EPA’s Draft Strategic Plan

I am pleased to announce that the [Draft FY 2022-2026 EPA Strategic Plan](#) was recently published in the *Federal Register* and is available for public comment through November 12, 2021. The Strategic Plan communicates and provides a roadmap to achieve EPA’s and the Administration’s priorities over the next four years. Building on work already begun under President Biden’s Executive Orders 13985: *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government* and 14008: *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, we are charting a course in this Strategic Plan where tackling climate change and advancing environmental justice and civil rights will be integral to all we do in carrying out EPA’s mission.

In this Strategic Plan, the agency renews its commitment to the three principles articulated by EPA’s first Administrator, William Ruckelshaus — follow the science, follow the law, and be transparent. We also add a fourth foundational principle: advance justice and equity. These four principles form the basis of the agency’s culture and will guide our day-to-day work and decision-making now and into the future.

For the first time, EPA’s plan includes a strategic goal focused solely on addressing climate change, as well as an unprecedented strategic goal to advance environmental justice and civil rights. These priorities are embedded throughout the Strategic Plan in the seven goals and four cross-agency strategies. The strategies articulate essential ways of working to accomplish our mission outcomes — instilling scientific integrity in decision making; considering children’s environmental health protection; advancing organizational excellence and workforce equity; and strengthening partnerships, including early, meaningful involvement with Tribes and states and on-the-ground engagement with communities. The plan also includes a suite of measures that will help us monitor progress and hold us accountable for achieving these priorities to protect human health and the environment.

Thank you to the agency leadership, managers, and staff who collaborated closely throughout the last several months and reached out to stakeholder groups — some of whom have not participated in this effort before — to develop this bold plan. The final plan will be issued in February along with EPA’s FY 2023 Budget.

Michael S. Regan  
Administrator



## EPA Report Shows Disproportionate Impacts of Climate Change on Socially Vulnerable Populations in the United States

**Contact Information:** EPA Press Office ([press@epa.gov](mailto:press@epa.gov))

A new EPA analysis shows that the most severe harms from climate change fall disproportionately upon underserved communities who are least able to prepare for, and recover from, heat waves, poor air quality, flooding, and other impacts. EPA's analysis indicates that racial and ethnic minority communities are particularly vulnerable to the greatest impacts of climate change. *Climate Change and Social Vulnerability in the United States: A Focus on Six Impact Sectors* is one of the most advanced environmental justice studies to date that looks at how projected climate change impacts may be distributed across the American public.

"The impacts of climate change that we are feeling today, from extreme heat to flooding to severe storms, are expected to get worse, and people least able to prepare and cope are disproportionately exposed," **said EPA Administrator Michael S. Regan** "This report punctuates the urgency of equitable action on climate change. With this level of science and data, we can more effectively center EPA's mission on achieving environmental justice for all."

EPA's new, peer-reviewed report shows the degree to which four socially vulnerable populations—defined based on income, educational attainment, race and ethnicity, and age—may be more exposed to the highest impacts of climate change. The report quantifies six types of impacts, including those to health from changes in air quality and extreme temperature, disruptions to weather-exposed workers, and flooding threats to property.

Key findings of the report include:

- That Black and African American individuals are projected to face higher impacts of climate change for all six impacts analyzed in this report, compared to all other demographic groups. For example, with 2°C (3.6°F) of global warming, Black and African American individuals are:
  - 34% more likely to currently live in areas with the highest projected increases in childhood asthma diagnoses. This rises to 41% under 4°C (7.2°F) of global warming.
  - 40% more likely to currently live in areas with the highest projected increases in extreme temperature related deaths. This rises to 59% under 4°C of global warming.
- That Hispanics and Latinos have high participation in weather-exposed industries, such as construction and agriculture, which are especially vulnerable to the effects of extreme temperatures. With 2°C (3.6°F) of global warming, Hispanic and Latino individuals are 43% more likely to currently live in areas with the highest projected reductions in labor hours due to extreme temperatures. With regards to transportation, Hispanic and Latino individuals are about 50% more likely to currently live in areas with the highest estimated increases in traffic delays due to increases in coastal flooding.

This significant study represents an important milestone in understanding the future impacts of climate change on different American populations, especially under resourced communities. Due to data and modeling limitations, this study is limited to the contiguous U.S. Future work will enhance both the coverage of other important areas, such as Hawaii and Alaska, and will explore additional impact sectors and measures of social vulnerability.

Today's analysis will help further efforts being taken by the Biden Administration across the Federal government to advance environmental justice and to address the disproportionate impacts that climate change is having on vulnerable communities. During his first weeks in office, President Biden issued Executive Order 14008 on [Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad](#), which established the first-ever [White House Environmental Justice Advisory Council](#), the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council, and the [Justice40 Initiative](#). Through the Justice40 Initiative, the Federal government is, for the first time in history, working to [ensure](#) that at least 40-percent of climate and clean energy investment benefits flow to disadvantaged communities.

Access the report: <https://www.epa.gov/cira/social-vulnerability-report>

Information about climate change: <https://www.epa.gov/climate-change>

Information about environmental justice: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

---

## **Additional Opportunities, Resources, and News**

### **Just Transition Fund**

With historic levels of federal funding now available through a range of federal agencies, the Just Transition Fund launched a new grantmaking opportunity in October 2021 to help coal communities develop strong applications for federal funding. Grants of up to \$25,000 are available on a rolling basis to support the development of strong federal applications, such as to secure technical expertise and to qualify as matching funds.

**Our Request for Proposals (RFP) to support federal applications can be found [here](#).** In addition, a guide to the broad range of federal programs available to communities in economic transition is available [here](#).

---

### **Department of Energy Seeking Clean Energy and Manufacturing Innovators for Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program**

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently announced the opening of applications for the 2022 cohorts in its Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program. Innovators selected for this program will join an extensive network of mentors and experts at U.S. National Laboratories to develop the next-generation technologies that will help pave the way to a clean energy future.

To provide participants with the support they need to evolve early-stage research and development innovation into viable businesses, the Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program offers:

- Two-year paid fellowships: Each fellowship includes a personal living stipend, health insurance stipend, and travel allowance.

- National laboratory access and research funding: In addition to unparalleled access to facilities, equipment, and expertise at a National Laboratory, participants receive research and development funding to foster research collaboration.
- Business mentors, entrepreneurial training, and networking: Fellows will have access to experienced business mentorship, entrepreneurial training programs, and exclusive networking opportunities. Innovators are also exposed to a wide range of leaders from academia, industry, government, and finance that can serve as advisors and partners.

EERE's Advanced Manufacturing Office (AMO) is seeking scientists and engineers with novel ideas for building a manufacturing future that supports economy-wide decarbonization. The program is particularly interested in ideas with the potential to improve U.S. manufacturing energy efficiency, material productivity, and competitiveness.

Learn more about the Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program and apply to one of the following 2022 cohorts:

- [Chain Reaction Innovations](#) (Argonne National Laboratory; Lemont, IL): **Applications due October 31st. Informational webinars** through October.
- [Cyclotron Road](#) (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; Berkeley, CA): **Applications due November 30. Informational webinars** through November.
- [Innovation Crossroads](#) (Oak Ridge National Laboratory; Oak Ridge, TN): **Applications due October 31. Informational webinars** through October.

For more information, click [here](#).

---

## NOAA Marine Debris Prevention Program

The NOAA Marine Debris Program is proud to announce our **FY 2022 Marine Debris Prevention notice of funding opportunity**.

NOAA will fund prevention projects that actively engage and educate a target audience (such as students, teachers, industries, etc.) in hands-on programs designed to raise awareness, reduce barriers to marine debris prevention, and encourage and support changes in behaviors to ensure long-term prevention of marine debris. NOAA will also fund projects in the U.S.-Mexico and U.S.-Canada border regions, subject to additional eligibility criteria.

The Letter of Intent (LOI) submission period for prevention projects will extend from September 13 to **October 29, 2021**. Applicants who submit successful LOIs will be invited to submit a full proposal following the LOI review period. The NOAA Marine Debris Program will host an applicant webinar later this year, providing an overview of the process and materials required for submitting a full application. More information will be posted on the NOAA Marine Debris Program website later this summer or fall.

For more information on this FY 2022 grant opportunity, please visit [Grants.gov](#) and the NOAA Marine Debris Program's [website](#).

---

## **Working with Restaurants to Reduce Plastic: A NOAA Seminar on Challenges and Successes, November 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 – 4:00 PM ET, via Adobe Connect**

You are invited to join environmental professionals from around the country to learn about working with restaurants to reduce plastic use. The **NOAA Marine Debris Program** is hosting a **two-day webinar** with current and past grantees who will share their challenges and lessons learned around approaching restaurants, reducing plastic, maintaining long-term relationships, and sharing resources

### Day 1 Speakers

- Jaclyn Wegner, Shedd Aquarium
- Margaret Tran, Salem Sound CoastWatch
- Nicole Chatterson, Zero Waste O’ahu
- Erin Bryant, Sea Education Association

### Day 2 Speakers

- Jill Bartolotta, Ohio Sea Grant
- Cade Kistler, Mobile Baykeeper
- Elizabeth Englebretson, Mississippi State University
- Grace Lee, Clean Water Fund

**Please register [HERE](#) by November 1<sup>st</sup>.** Webinar recording and resources will be available following the event. For questions, please contact Sara Lowe, Great Lakes Regional Coordinator, at [sarah.lowe@noaa.gov](mailto:sarah.lowe@noaa.gov)

---

## **Navigating Federal Funding for Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions, Tuesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021, 11:00 – 12:30PM EDT**

EPA and other federal members of the [Green Infrastructure Federal Collaborative](#) are pleased to announce “Navigating Federal Funding for Green Infrastructure and Nature-Based Solutions”. During this webinar, members of the Green Infrastructure Federal Collaborative will discuss funding and technical assistance opportunities that advance the implementation of green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. Attendees will learn how federal programs are helping build vibrant and resilient communities with programs that support the design, construction, and maintenance of green infrastructure. Breakout sessions hosted by Collaborative members will provide attendees with the opportunity to pose questions and interact directly with relevant federal agencies.

### Speakers:

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
  - Sarah Watling, Bradley Dean, Charley Carson, Josh Human
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
  - Matt Chasse
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
  - Russel Ames, Kevin Farmer
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
  - Mindy Simmons
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

- Jorge Morales, B. Cory Schwartz, Seema Thomas
- U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA)
  - Naomi Friedman
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
  - Wynne Miller, Robyn DeYoung, Ellie Flaherty, Karen Fligger, Michael Goralczyk, Santina Wortman, Samantha Rachko

To register for this webinar, please click [HERE](#).

---

## **Gulf of Mexico Conference (GoMCon) opens registration and call for abstracts**

The Gulf of Mexico Conference (GoMCon) is scheduled for **April 25-28, 2022 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana**. GoMCon combines the annual Gulf of Mexico All Hands Meeting, the annual Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference, and the tri-annual State of the Gulf Summit. Emphasizing the intersection of science and management across the Gulf Coast region, GoMCon will include sessions on themes that are important to ecosystem and community resilience as well as restoration and natural resource management. **Registration is \$250 for the entire four days and is now open! Register [HERE](#).**

The GoMCon Program Committee invites you to submit an abstract for a presentation that promotes the integration of science and management into decision-making in these conference themes:

- Resilience
- Living Resources
- Science, Management, Practice, and Policy
- Climate Impacts
- Water and Sediment Management
- Citizen Science, Education, Communication, and Extension
- Water Quality and Quantity
- Habitat Management and Restoration
- Emerging Issues

**The deadline for abstract submissions is November 12, 2021. Please submit abstracts [HERE](#).**

GoMCon is hosted by the Gulf of Mexico Alliance with sponsorship support from numerous partners. Contact Becky Ginn ([becky.ginn@gomxa.org](mailto:becky.ginn@gomxa.org)) for more information on becoming a conference sponsor.

---

## **Gulf of Mexico Alliance Hurricane Mini-Grant Program**

GOMA's hurricane mini-grant program provides funding for projects that address immediate needs after major hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico related to our priority areas: water quality, wildlife/fisheries, natural habitats, and community resilience. The mini-grant program is intended for communities and non-traditional audiences that need immediate post-storm support and that may not qualify for larger assistance programs. Past GOMA hurricane mini-grants supported projects to repair wildlife rescue facilities, restore marshes, improve impaired waterways, and more.

Contact Becky Ginn ([becky.ginn@gomxa.org](mailto:becky.ginn@gomxa.org)) to support this program.

---

## **EPA Now Hosting Biweekly National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Calls**

**Contact:** EPA Press Office ([press@epa.gov](mailto:press@epa.gov))

**WASHINGTON** — The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) invites Environmental Justice (EJ) advocates and the public to participate in the agency's [National Environmental Justice Community Engagement Calls](#), now happening biweekly, to discuss and receive feedback on all aspects of EJ at EPA with partners and communities.

"The voice of communities is what centers and drives our efforts to advance environmental justice at EPA," said **Office of Environmental Justice Director Matthew Tejada**. "Our mission to protect the health and environments of everyone in the United States can only be achieved if we listen to and engage with communities who have not received the same level of protection. Given the historic mandate of the Biden-Harris Administration and Administrator Regan's leadership, these calls are a direct line for EPA to hear from communities."

By increasing the community engagement calls from quarterly to biweekly, EPA will further encourage an open dialogue with EJ leaders and advocates. These meetings not only serve as an opportunity to give an update on EPA's EJ work and its resources, but also to listen and learn from communities, partners, and stakeholders. Additionally, the biweekly community engagement calls speak to the agency's commitment to [Justice40](#), an initiative announced by President Joe Biden, to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to disadvantaged communities.

The **next national EJ community engagement call is Tuesday, Nov. 9, 2021**. Register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/epa-natl-environmental-justice-community-engagement-call-nov-9-2021-registration-191211668247>

To see the calendar for upcoming calls, register for upcoming calls, and view meeting materials for past calls, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/national-environmental-justice-community-engagement-calls>. You can also follow the EPA's Office of Environmental Justice on Twitter ([@EPAEnvJustice](https://twitter.com/EPAEnvJustice)) and subscribe to the EPA's EJ listserv by sending a blank email to [join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov](mailto:join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov).

---

## **In this New Orleans neighborhood, nonprofit helps residents adapt to warming climate, New Orleans Times Picayune, 10/19/2021 – Sustaining Our Urban Landscape (SOUL)**

Dozens of volunteers descended upon Pontchartrain Park and plunged shovels into the dirt. The historic New Orleans neighborhood gained about 80 new trees Saturday, and the environmental nonprofit Sustaining Our Urban Landscape aims to plant at least 600 more in partnership with the residents. It's one of several initiatives to mitigate the effects of extreme heat and flooding, both of which are expected to worsen as the world continues to warm. **Read full article [HERE](#).**



***Sustaining Our Urban Landscape (SOUL) Reforesting Pontchartrain Park New Orleans Project: Engaging Community in Restoration, Education and Stewardship***

Engage 600 community volunteers to plant 700 large, native trees in order to restore 457 acres of urban forest, mitigate stormwater runoff into Lake Pontchartrain, enhance habitat for urban bird species, and increase the Pontchartrain Park community's access to nature. The project will engage the Pontchartrain Park community via the Pontchartrain Park Neighborhood Association and ACTION Empowerment, Inc. Other partners include the City through The New Orleans Department of Parks and Parkways, The Water Collaborative of Greater New Orleans, and Sustaining Our Urban Landscape (SOUL).

The Pontchartrain Park New Orleans Project will restore 457 acres of riparian urban forest habitat to improve ecosystem services such as flood protection, heat island mitigation, carbon retention, and stormwater runoff into Lake Pontchartrain, while improving habitats for wildlife. The project will engage 600 community volunteers to plant 700 15-gallon, 1"-caliper, native, water-loving trees on the public right-of-way—one tree in front of each home in the neighborhood. Tree species include Live Oak, Bald Cypress, Red Maple, Nuttall Oak, Overcup Oak, Savannah Holly, 'Little Gem' Magnolia, and Sweet Bay Magnolia.

The Pontchartrain Park New Orleans Project will occur in the Pontchartrain Park neighborhood in Gentilly, New Orleans. This is located in Orleans Parish (same as county) of New Orleans and within the Mississippi Flyway. This community is situated approximately 2,000 feet south of Lake Pontchartrain, New Orleans LA.

The project is receiving \$50,000.00 under the Urban Waters 5-Star Grant RFP and includes \$88,441 in match. Project to begin 8/1/2021 and end 1/31/2023

---

**New Urban Water Legislation in House and Senate**

**[Stanton, Meijer Introduce Bipartisan Bill to Revitalize the Nation's Urban Waterways](#)**

**October 5, 2021**

Today, Rep. Greg Stanton and Peter Meijer of Michigan introduced the bipartisan Urban Waters Federal Partnership Act, legislation to formally authorize an Environmental Protection Agency-led partnership that supports improvements to water systems and drives urban renewal.

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership works to reconnect communities to open spaces, as well as spur private investment and job creation. The Rio Reimagined project in metro Phoenix was officially added to the partnership in September 2020.

"The revitalization of the Rio Salado is one of the most consequential projects in our state today, and I'm incredibly proud—first as a mayor and now as a member of Congress—to have worked on it for more than a decade now," said Stanton. "The support of the federal government is critical to restore this ecosystem, protect our water supply and provide continued opportunities for economic growth."

The Grand River project in Grand Rapids, MI, was added to the partnership in 2013.

“In our own backyard, we are fortunate to have the Grand River watershed. The ongoing efforts to restore our urban waterway has already demonstrated positive effects in our community—from jobs to outdoor recreation, the Grand River project is an excellent example of how the Urban Waters Federal Partnership can help propel critical revitalization efforts. I am proud to lead this bipartisan effort with Rep Stanton. These funds will help support ongoing projects and ensure more communities across the country can be reconnected to their waterways,” said Meijer.

During his time as Phoenix mayor, Stanton worked with Sen. John McCain, Rep. Ed Pastor, other Valley mayors and tribal leaders to rehabilitate the Salt River. Under Stanton’s leadership, Phoenix made many investments along the river, including funding a \$120 million project to turn the swath of riverbed between 24th Street and 19th Avenue into a riparian area and restoring the Tres Rios Wetlands, a 700-acre wetland and tertiary water reclamation facility.

Stanton—the only Arizona member on the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure—has continued his advocacy in Congress. In the 2020 Water Resources Development Act, Stanton successfully included a provision that directs the Corps of Engineers to expedite completion of a report necessary to continue construction of the Tres Rios ecosystem restoration project. This year, he secured \$1.8 million in Community Project Funding to support this critical report.

Sens. Kyrsten Sinema and John Cornyn of Texas introduced companion legislation in the Senate.

<https://stanton.house.gov/2021/10/stanton-meijer-introduce-bipartisan-bill-to-revitalize-the-nation-s-urban-waterways>

### **Rio Reimagined Project Would Get Renewed Support from New Sinema-Cornyn Legislation** *Senators’ bipartisan legislation formalizes program that revitalizes the river corridor through the Rio Reimagined Project*

**WASHINGTON** – U.S. Senators Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) and John Cornyn (R-Texas) introduced the *Urban Waters Federal Partnership Act*—bipartisan legislation that authorizes a program led by the Environmental Protection Agency that supports the revitalization of the river corridor through the Rio Reimagined Project.

“We’re continuing the important work started by Senator John McCain in revitalizing the Rio Reimagined Project, which will improve water systems, boost economic growth, and reconnect communities,” said Sinema.

“My husband worked tirelessly for Arizona, the business community and local municipalities to imagine a grand new vision for the valley’s river corridor. That vision, the Rio Reimagined project, continues on today. I spoke in favor of this project’s Urban Waters Federal Partnership designation in 2020, and I applaud Senator Sinema for introducing legislation to move this forward.” -Cindy McCain, Chair of the McCain Institute

"The Gila River Indian Community applauds Senator Sinema for her leadership on the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Act. This bill will support the ongoing efforts of Rio Reimagined in restoring and revitalizing the Salt River, and other urban river systems around the country, and we support Senator Sinema in this critical effort." -Governor Stephen Roe Lewis, Gila River Indian Community.

"Arizona business leaders have been fortunate to observe the high value associated with making dreams a reality, and we look forward to continuing our partnerships with other sectors that share our passion for, and commitment to, working together to realize the full potential of the Rio Reimagined vision. We're grateful for Senator Sinema's leadership on this important project and are eager to continue our work together." -Neil Guiliano, President & CEO, Greater Phoenix Leadership (GPL) and former Mayor of Tempe, AZ

"The City of Buckeye is grateful to Senator Sinema for her championing of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Act. The provisions contained in this bill would assist in Buckeye's efforts to restore an 18 mile segment of the Gila River by allowing the Rio Reimagined Project into the Urban Waters Federal Partnership and providing important expertise to guide our work. Senator Sinema's efforts to preserve and improve water resources in Arizona are greatly appreciated!" -Mayor Eric Orsborn, City of Buckeye

"I applaud Senator Sinema for working toward continuance of Senator McCain's legacy, and allowing these conversations to advance in a meaningful way," said Goodyear Mayor Georgia Lord. "Rio Reimagined provides an exciting opportunity for growth and economic development throughout the region."

"On behalf of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (SRPMIC), I want to thank Senator Sinema and Senator Cornyn for recognizing the need to invest in urban watersheds," said President Martin Harvier. "Incorporating tribal and local voices into the revitalization of the Salt River will improve outcomes in our region and ensure collaboration on this important issue."

"We thank Sen. Sinema for her leadership on the proposal of the bipartisan Urban Water Federal Partnership that will help improve the nation's water systems, including here in Greater Phoenix through the Rio Reimagined project," said Chris Camacho, president & CEO of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. "This program streamlines federal resources and investments that help stimulate local economies and our region will be a beneficiary of those outputs."

"Continuation of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Program is extremely important, especially to Maricopa County where the Rio Reimagined Project is located. This sustainable revitalization project will create economic opportunity and provide equitable access to beautiful open spaces for the public to enjoy. I am grateful to Senator Sinema for her efforts to continue the vital federal program." Chairman Jack Sellers, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors.

"Authorizing this partnership for an additional five years is an important recognition of the regional collaboration and cooperation begun by Sen. John McCain and Congressman Ed Pastor. Phoenix, and the other river communities along the 45-miles of the Rio Reimagined project, have been working toward this for decades," said Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego. "Joining the EPA's Urban Waters Federal Partnership last year renewed our momentum. This re-authorization is equally important, particularly at this time in our history when issues of climate, and of preserving natural assets, is front-and-center in the minds of the people of Phoenix."

“This legislation is crucial to advancing a sustainable future for the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, a program that demonstrates the value of America’s rivers within metropolitan settings and how the well-being of our citizens is attached to the active stewardship of these irreplaceable watersheds,” said Arizona State University President Michael Crow. “ASU supports this effort and commends the work of Senator Sinema and the Arizona delegation for their focus on championing community waterways within the U.S. EPA’s UWFP. We are especially grateful of the support for the Rio Reimagined in Arizona as the 20th and most recent Urban Waters location and we remain committed to catalyzing local river revitalization and with it, the enhancement of a vibrant economy, and resilient communities along the Salt and Gila River corridor.”

“I applaud Senator Sinema for her leadership on the Rio Reimagined project. The dream of restoring the Salt River ecosystem is shared by every Valley community it touches. The project will help revitalize this natural asset which will bring people together and spark an economic rebirth that will benefit the entire metropolitan area.” -Mayor John Giles, City of Mesa

“Tempe is one of the river corridor communities that is uniquely positioned to reimagine the Rio Salado as a community asset for all. The Urban Waters Federal Partnership will be a resource that can help transform community desires to actionable progress that provides enhanced social, economic, recreational, and environmental services to that community – and region.” -Corey Woods, Mayor of Tempe

“For many years, the Rio Reimagined project has been envisioned as a means to connect the West Valley to the East Valley using the tremendous natural resources along the river corridor in our communities,” said Avondale Mayor Kenn Weise. “We cannot forget the late Senator McCain for the important role he played in shaping this ambitious vision, and the work of local leaders and Arizona State University to bring it to fruition. We are grateful to Senator Sinema for co-sponsoring legislation that will move these plans closer to becoming a reality for the region.”

The bipartisan legislation authorizes the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, which reconnects urban communities with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with community-led revitalization efforts to improve the nation’s water systems and promote economic, environmental, and social benefits.

The late Arizona Senator John McCain spearheaded the Rio Reimagined project in 2017 to transform and revitalize the Salt and Gila river systems. With the convening of Arizona State University (ASU) and support of the cities of Phoenix, Mesa, Tempe, Avondale, Goodyear and Buckeye as well as the Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community and the Gila River Indian Community, the project was officially added to the EPA’s Urban Waters Federal Partnership Program in September 2020. Through this broad collaboration, plans are advancing to identify and move projects forward that will take advantage of the metro Phoenix corridor’s rapid growth and reinvigorate communities along the banks of this 45-mile long stretch of the rivers.