



Chi-Cal Rivers Fund

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PARTNERS

- BNSF Railway
- Cleveland-Cliffs
- Crown Family Philanthropies
- Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
- Hunter Family Foundation
- The Joyce Foundation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Walder Foundation

ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) works with partners to foster sustainable and impactful conservation solutions so that people and nature thrive together. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF has grown to become the nation's largest conservation foundation. Since its founding, NFWF has funded more than 23,900 projects that have generated a total conservation impact of \$12 billion. Learn more at www.nfwf.org



Monarch butterfly

OVERVIEW

The Chicago and Calumet watersheds comprise a highly engineered system of waterways that provide many benefits to the people and wildlife in the region. Despite these services, the waterways have been degraded by many stressors that have significantly reduced the ecological, economic and community values of the system. The Chi-Cal Rivers Fund (Fund), a public-private partnership among three federal agencies, three corporations and five private foundations, was created to address these stressors by improving the health, vitality, and accessibility of the waterways in the Chicago and Calumet regions by supporting nature-based infrastructure, habitat restoration, and activating and increasing access to habitats and natural areas.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and BNSF Railway, Cleveland-Cliffs, Crown Family Philanthropies, Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Hunter Family Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service and the Walder Foundation announced the 13th year of funding for the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund. The four grants announced were awarded \$1.2 million in funding and will leverage \$1 million in grantee matching contributions, providing a total conservation impact of over \$2.2 million.

IMPACT

To date, the Fund has awarded a total of \$17.6 million through 76 grants. Grantees matched this investment with an additional \$ 31 million, bringing the total on-the-ground conservation impact to more than \$48.6 million. These investments have supported:

- Adding more than 22.5 million gallons of stormwater storage capacity
- Enhancing 5,932 acres of riparian, wetland and upland habitat
- Adding or improving 269 acres of public natural areas

The 2025 slate grants will support projects that also will:

- Add 173,780 gallons of stormwater storage
- Restore 120 acres of wetland and upland habitat
- Restore 89 acres of floodplain

(continued)



Fish survey

2025 GRANTS

Activating Restored Habitats and Natural Areas to Advance Long-term Stewardship in Gary (IN)

Grantee: Calumet Collaborative
 Grant Amount:..... \$300,000
 Matching Funds:..... \$420,000
 Total Project Amount:..... \$720,000
 Activate and maintain three sites on the Little Calumet River corridor in Gary, Indiana. Project will restore 89 acres of habitat, improve 45 access points, and connect conservation and community.

Advancing Stewardship and Restoring Pollinator Habitat in the Grand Calumet River (IN)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
 Grant Amount:..... \$300,000
 Matching Funds:..... \$78,000
 Total Project Amount:..... \$378,000
 Convert nonnative grasses and degraded habitat on right-of-ways into pollinator habitat through invasive species removal, planting and seeding in Lake County, Indiana. Project will convert 33 acres of habitat, plant 12 species across 16 acres and hold 14 engagement events to connect people to nature.

Expanding Stormwater Management and Local Capacity through Native Tree Planting and Education (IL)

Grantee: The Morton Arboretum
 Grant Amount:..... \$322,000
 Matching Funds:..... \$175,000
 Total Project Amount:..... \$497,000
 Reduce watershed flooding, improve native habitats and provide training on tree planting to engage local residents in suburban Chicago. Project will plant 700 native trees along priority waterways, sustain 16 jobs and add 173,780 gallons of stormwater storage annually.

Improving Wetland Habitat for Species of Concern at Indian Ridge Marsh North (IL)

Grantee: The Wetlands Initiative
 Grant Amount:..... \$300,000
 Matching Funds:..... \$348,000
 Total Project Amount:..... \$648,000
 Restore degraded shoreline at Indian Ridge Marsh North in Chicago, enhance the connected wetland and upland habitat, and connect residents to natural areas through public events. Project will restore 101 acres of wetland and upland habitat, restore 1,169 linear feet of shoreline and reach 200 people.