



# River Ecology and Governance Task Force

09/14/21 | 3 pm to 4:30 pm

Meeting Minutes:

## Welcome and Introductions

The meeting kicked off at 3 pm with participants saying hi in the chat. Approximately 67 members of the Task Force attended the meeting. The group reviewed the Task Force objectives and short-term goals for 2021 - 2022 as a reminder of what the group is working on collaboratively. The Task Force short-term goals were revised after the June meeting to reflect input that was received.

## Input Survey

Present Task Force members replied to a survey with questions regarding their preferences for future meetings, including length of the Task Force meetings, meeting frequency, and meeting timing. The last question asked members about which type of partner-led presentations they would like to see as part of the formal meetings. 51 members responded to the survey.

## Rivers Projects Feedback Session

The Chicago Community Trust recently announced projects advancing to the proposal round to receive funding as part of their Our Great Rivers grant program. An overview of the Our Great Rivers RFP was presented followed by the priority criteria used to select projects. Seven projects participated in the review session. They provided an overview of their project information followed by questions from Task Force members. A project input form was circulated as a way to allow Task Force members to provide their feedback to the project teams. The project teams that presented are as follows: Alliance for the Great Lakes, Calumet Collaborative, Current, Freshwater Labs at UIC, Great Cities Institute at UIC, North River Commission, and Urban Rivers.

## System Plans Working Group Check-In and Discussion

Task Force members were reminded of the current structure of the Task Force with two work groups: System Plans and Development Reviews. There was an update on the progress of the System Plans Working Group and Task Force members engaged in a feedback exercise. The System Plans Working Group created draft principles and themes for a system-wide and neighborhood approach to the river system. The group used a collaborative and interactive process to create the principles and goals. During the meeting, members participated in a working session to review the draft principles and provide feedback. Members opened a Google

Document with the draft principles and used symbols to indicate their level of agreement with the statements.

### **PAS Study Workshop Next Steps and Feedback**

The Army Corps provided an update and additional information on the progress of the Planning Assistance to States Restoration Framework Plan that has been ongoing in 2021. They provided information on how the input from Task Force members was being used to identify opportunity sites and upcoming meetings that Task Force members can attend for the Main Stem and North Branch as well as the North Fork and North Shore Channel. The study will also be used to help scope opportunities to be evaluated further. There's potential for a budget request for a feasibility study for FY 2023. The scope would look at all of the opportunities and determine which ones have federal interest in implementing. This study would last for e years with a cross-shared amount of \$3 million. Cross-sharing agreements would need to be put in place before the study would be initiated. Congress would also have to authorize the funding.

### **Project Status, Updates and Support Needed**

A brief update about the ongoing process of the Development Review Working Group was provided to members. The Department of Planning and Development noted the recent meetings that had occurred and previewed future meetings. They also walked through when the development review process occurred within the overall timeline of the broader review process. The Shedd Aquarium provided an overview of a research grant opportunity that it is applying for and seeking letters of support.

### **Upcoming Meeting Dates and Adjourn**

The group was reminded of upcoming meetings and workshops for the remainder of 2021. The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm.