



Survey Request: Preferred Format for Northwest Indiana (NWI) Urban Waters Partnership Meetings

We want to hear from you! The NWI Urban Waters Core Team is exploring moving back to an in-person meeting format for quarterly meetings of the NWI Urban Waters Partnership and we want to know works best for our partners. Please complete a <1 minute survey to share your preferences for in-person, hybrid or virtual meeting formats.

You may complete the survey directly through the Survey Monkey Link [here](#) or by emailing your responses to the survey questions listed below to Victoria Wittig at vwittig@pnw.edu. We look forward to hearing from you!

NWI Urban Waters Partnership Meeting Format Preference: In-person, virtual or hybrid?

1. What is your preference for the format of quarterly NWI Urban Waters Partnership meetings?

- I prefer a virtual meeting format
- I prefer a hybrid meeting format
- I prefer an in-person meeting format
- No preference

2. How many in-person meetings would you be able to attend each year? (Please note there are four meetings held per year)

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4

3. Do you have any other comments or questions regarding the format of NWI Urban Waters Partnership meetings? For example, would you prefer **one** in-person meeting and **three** virtual meetings? What locations/distances present a barrier for your in-person attendance?

Partner Spotlight: Welcome to Leo Sawyers!

Welcome to the Student Conservation Association's (SCA) new NWI Community Program Manager, Leopold Sawyers.

Leo is a lifelong resident of NWI! He grew up in Hammond and has also lived in Westville and Michigan City. Leo studied at Purdue University Northwest where he was first introduced to SCA and the CommuniTree Program. Starting as a volunteer, Leo fed his passion for his community and environment by serving on the SCA's Calumet Tree Conservation Corps for two seasons. He next served on the SCA's Indiana Dunes Crew in 2019 and as a Lake County Parks Intern at Gibson Woods where he worked on fuels reduction, invasive species removal and restoration. Leo spent that last few years leading conservation corps projects and community programs in California, Maryland, and Washington D.C. He recently returned to the region and is excited to be taking on a new role with the SCA as the NWI Program Manager to build on the important work underway in the region that supports our diverse ecosystems, communities, and natural treasures. You can connect with Leo by email at lsawyers@thesca.org



Things are looking up for Leo while in the field in Washington, D.C. and pictured with the SCA's Indiana Dunes Crew at Cowles Bog in 2019.

Has someone new recently joined your organization? Would you like to introduce them to the NWI Urban Waters Partnership in a Partner Spotlight feature?
Please email Victoria Wittig: vwittig@pnw.edu

Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Audit

The Chicago Wilderness Alliance (CWA) invites partners to complete an audit of their organization by March 9, 2023 to help the CWA understand and amplify important JEDI work. *Each organization only needs to submit one response.* If your organization has any questions about the audit or is interested in having a facilitated session to assist you in filling it out, feel free to email Dani Abboud at dabboud@brushwoodcenter.org



CWA JEDI Audit

Funding Opportunities

The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership may be able to provide assistance to advance your initiatives by exploring grant opportunities, building partnerships, and helping you develop competitive proposals. Email [Victoria Wittig](mailto:Victoria.Wittig@nirpc.org) to discuss your projects and ways we can help.

[Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission \(NIRPC\) Spring 2023 CommuniTree Grant Program](#)

NIRPC is accepting applications for Spring 2023 tree planting in NWI communities through the CommuniTree Grant Program. Communities can apply to receive quality 1+ inch caliper native trees to plant and maintain in public spaces. View the application form [here](#).

*Applications due March 10, 2023

[Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Environmental Water Resources Projects](#)

This funding supports projects focused on environmental benefits that have been developed as part of a collaborative process to increase the reliability of water resources. The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law includes additional authority for the Bureau of Reclamation to provide funding for multi-benefit projects that improve watershed health. To learn more about eligibility and how to apply, click [here](#).

*Applications due March 28, 2023

*Funding available: \$3 million per project

[Indiana American Water Environmental Grant Program](#)

The Environmental Grant Program offers funding for innovative, community-based environmental projects that improve, restore or protect the watersheds, surface water and groundwater supplies in our local communities. To qualify, a proposed project must be: 1. Located within an American Water service area, 2. Be completed between May and November of the grant funding year, 3. Be a new or innovative community initiative, or serve as significant expansion to an existing program. View the program brochure [here](#). View the application form [here](#).

*Applications due March 31, 2023

*Award Maximum: \$10,000

[Legacy Foundation Transform Lake County Grants](#)

Transform Lake County Grants will continue to support our communities with a sharpened focus on the most pressing challenges our community is facing today: systemic racism and racial injustice and the underinvestment and lack of infrastructure in under-resourced and marginalized communities across Lake County. Register for an account to apply [here](#).

*Applications due April 1, 2023

*Award Range: \$2,000-35,000

[NIPSCO Environmental Action Grants](#)

Each spring, NIPSCO supports environmental restoration and education projects throughout NWI that have a direct impact in the NIPSCO service area. Grants are available for 501(c)3 or other non-profit organizations who are invited to submit a grant request through NIPSCO's online request portal [here](#).

*Applications due April 7, 2023

*Award Range: \$500-5,000

[US Environmental Protection Agency \(EPA\) Environmental Justice Collaborative Problem-Solving \(EJCPS\) Cooperative Agreement Program](#)

The EPA's EJCPS Program provides funding for projects that address local environmental and/or public health issues in their community. The Program assists recipients in building collaborative partnerships with stakeholders to develop solutions at the local level. View the Request for Applications [here](#). View recent applicant webinars [here](#).

*Applications due April 10, 2023

[US EPA Environmental Justice Government-to-Government \(EJG2G\) Program](#)

The EJG2G Program works to support and/or create model state activities that lead to measurable environmental or public health results in communities disproportionately burdened by environmental harms and risks. These models should leverage or utilize existing resources or assets of state agencies to develop key tools and processes that integrate environmental justice considerations into state governments and government programs. View the Request for Applications [here](#). View recent applicant webinars [here](#).

*Applications due April 10, 2023

[Great Lakes Commission, Great Lakes Sediment and Nutrient Reduction Program \(GLSNRP\)](#)

The GLSNRP provides grants to reduce nutrients and sediments entering the Great Lakes. This year's program will continue to help local partners take action to reduce nutrient loads from agricultural watersheds, eroding shorelines and streambanks in the Great Lakes basin. Register for the applicant webinar [here](#).

*Applicant Webinar March 14, 2023 at 9:00 CT

*Applications due April 21, 2023

*Funding available: \$300,000 over four years

[US EPA Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Grantmaking \(EJ TCGM\) Program](#)

This new, innovative program will fund up to 11 entities to serve as "Grantmakers" to community-based projects that reduce pollution. Selected "Grantmakers," such as Minority Serving Institutions, will develop an efficient, simplified process so that organizations that historically have faced barriers to receiving funding can more seamlessly apply for grants that address environmental harms and risks. Learn more [here](#).

*Applications due May 31, 2023

[US EPA Pollution Prevention \(P2\) Grants](#)

EPA will soon announce two new P2 grant opportunities funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law: 1. Environmental Justice in Communities and 2. Environmental Justice Through Safer and More Sustainable Products. EPA is providing notice of these grant opportunities in advance so potential applicants can make the necessary preparations to submit high-quality applications. To learn more about these grants and receive notifications when they are available, click [here](#).

*Applications due Spring 2023

Partner Opportunities & Resources

[Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\) Guidebook](#)

The IRA provides grant programs, loan programs and other investments for clean energy and climate action. Billions of dollars of federal funding has been specifically allocated to "Harnessing Nature-Based Solutions and Climate-Smart Agriculture to Deliver Economic, Climate, and Resilience Benefits," as outlined on page 129. Download the IRA Guidebook [here](#).

[National Wildlife Federation \(NWF\) Nature-based Solutions Funding Database](#)

The NWF has developed a comprehensive and interactive database of federal funding and technical assistance opportunities. Access the database [here](#).

Save the Dates for Upcoming NWI Urban Waters

Partnership Meetings!

Save the Dates for the next three 2023 NWI Urban Waters Partnership Meetings

Thursday, April 20, 9:30-11:30am CDT via Zoom

Thursday, July 20, 9:30-11:30am CDT location TBD

Thursday, October 19, 9:30-11:30am CST location TBD

The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership focuses on the Lake Michigan watershed in Lake, LaPorte and Porter Counties, Indiana.

Urban Waters works to connect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and state and local partners. The goals are to improve the Nation's water systems and to promote their economic, environmental and social benefits.

NWI Urban Waters | Northwest Indiana, Lake, Porter, & LaPorte Counties, IN 46360

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