



Save the Date: The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership will meet again on Thursday, July 18

**Northwest Indiana (NWI)
Urban Waters Federal
Partnership (UWFP) Meeting**
Thursday, July 18, 2024
9:30-11:30 am CT

In-Person Location
[Portage Lakefront & Riverwalk](#)
100 Riverwalk Dr, Portage, IN
46368

Microsoft Teams Meeting Link
[Click here to join the meeting](#)
Meeting ID: 244 809 439 861
Passcode: 69x7V9
Or call in (audio only)
1-773-352-2023
Phone Conference ID: 470 097 526



Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. Partner Presentations
4. Partner Updates & Announcements

Save the Date for the Final NWI UWFP Meeting of 2024
Thursday, October 17, 9:30-11:30am CST (hybrid meeting)

2024 Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Work Plan

The 2024 NWI UWFP Work Plan provides a summary of partner accomplishments from 2023 and an overview of partner goals for 2024. The impressive scope of work summarized in the Work Plan is organized into six key focus areas and

several regional initiatives, including:

- Grand Calumet River Area of Concern
- West Branch of the Little Calumet River
- Hobart Marsh and Deep River
- East Branch of the Little Calumet River
- Indiana Dunes Ecosystems
- Trail Creek Watershed
- CommuniTree Program
- Educational Initiatives
- Calumet Land Conservation Partnership
- Chicago Wilderness Alliance 2024 Congress
- Climate Mitigation and Resiliency
- Lake Michigan Lakewide Action and Management Plan
- Water Pollution Prevention Roundtable

URBANWATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

NORTHWEST INDIANA LOCATION

2024 Northwest Indiana
Urban Waters Federal Partnership
Work Plan

2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Goals



Above: A collage of photos shared by NWI UWFP partners and featured throughout the 2024 NWI UWFP Work Plan.

Congratulations to all partners for an outstanding 2023 and a 2024 that is well on its way to becoming another great year of notable achievements in NWI. Please reach out to the NWI UWFP Ambassador, Victoria Wittig, with any questions at: vwittig@pnw.edu

Congratulations to Liz McCloskey of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on her retirement!

On April 30th, 2024, long time U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Biologist, Liz McCloskey, retired after a distinguished career of 52 years in the field. All but seven years of service was spent with the USFWS, the exception being a stint with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Nature Preserves. Liz developed a strong legacy within the environmental community of NWI through her involvement with a multitude of organizations including Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Save the Dunes, the Porter County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, among many others. Liz has also been deeply involved in conservation and restoration efforts in NWI for decades including significant contributions to the "Frame the Little Calumet River Conservation Area" initiative. Liz was an original partner of the NWI UWFP and an active participant in partnership meetings, contributing her time, talents, and expertise whenever possible. Liz remains an active volunteer and is looking forward to seeing friends and colleagues out and about in the region. The NWI UWFP is grateful to Liz for her many years of service and wishes her the very best for her retirement!



Above: A photo of Liz McCloskey during the East Branch Summit and Paddle in September of 2023. Liz is pictured in front of several kayaks on the East Branch of the Little Calumet River on a sunny day with trees lining the bank of the River in the background. Photo by Dan Plath.

Environmental Protection Agency Environmental Justice Virtual Engagement Session

You are invited to Join EPA Region 5 for a virtual community engagement session to learn about Environmental Justice (EJ) resources.

- Learn about EPA's EJ goals and principles
- Connect with local and state-wide partners
- Identify questions and topics for continued learning
- Share your environmental needs and priorities
- Learn about EJ grants and technical assistance programs

You may contact Jesse Cassiano, EPA Region 5's Senior Community Engagement Specialist at Cassiano.Jesse@epa.gov or (312) 353-8979 with any questions.

WHAT

Region 5 EJ Community Engagement Session

DATE

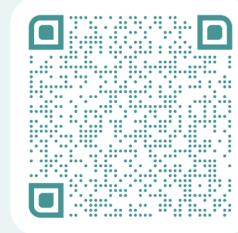
Monday, June 10

TIME

6:00-7:30 pm Central Time

REGISTER HERE

Follow the link <http://bit.ly/4dGBfTD> or scan the QR code below.



Delta Institute's NWI Tree Planting Consortium Best Management Practice Toolkit

The Delta Institute's [NWI Tree Planting Consortium](#), recently launched their free [Best Management Practices \(BMP\) Toolkit](#). This toolkit encompasses a range of strategies for effective tree planting planning, successful tree planting initiatives, meticulous tree maintenance, and the establishment of Tree City USA ordinances. The BMP toolkit serves as a valuable resource for setting forestry program goals, fostering a holistic approach to urban forestry.



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) to discuss your projects and ways we can help.

Unity Foundation "Power for Good" Community Grants

"Power for Good" Community Grants are available on a competitive basis to qualified nonprofit organizations, governmental bodies, and educators serving La Porte County. The Unity Foundation welcomes and encourages interested applicants to contact them with questions concerning policies, guidelines, or application procedures. Application information is available [here](#).

**Applications due July 19, 2024*

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund

The NFWF Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund is now accepting applications for competitive grant funding. Up to \$5.1 million is expected to be available for grant awards in 2024. Details about this funding opportunity are provided in

the [Request for Proposals](#), and additional program information can be viewed on the [Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund](#) homepage. Different from previous years, there is no pre-proposal stage in 2024.

**Full proposals due Wednesday July 24, 2024*

Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program (CWMP)

The CWMP contributes to the WaterSMART strategy by providing funding to watershed groups to encourage diverse stakeholders to form local solutions to address their water management needs. Funding is provided on a competitive basis for watershed group development, watershed restoration planning and implementation of watershed management projects. The award floor is \$10,000 and the ceiling is \$300,000. To learn more about the program, click [here](#).

**Second round applications due September 3, 2024*

Department of the Interior WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I

The Department of the Interior invites states, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts, local governmental entities, non-profit organizations, existing watershed groups and local and special districts to submit proposals for Phase I activities to develop a watershed group, complete watershed restoration planning activities and design watershed management projects. The award ceiling for the WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program is \$300,000 and the floor is \$10,000. To learn more about eligibility and apply, click [here](#).

**Second round applications due September 3, 2024*

US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Community Change Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity

EPA is accepting applications on a rolling basis for \$2 billion in Inflation Reduction Act funding available to support community-driven projects that build capacity for communities to tackle environmental and climate justice challenges, strengthen their climate resilience and advance clean energy. There will be two tracks of funding under this opportunity. Track I will fund approximately 150 large, transformational community-driven investment grants of \$10 million - \$20 million. Track II will fund approximately 20 meaningful engagement grants of \$1 million - \$3 million. Grants cannot exceed 3-years in duration. To learn more about this opportunity, click [here](#).

**Applications due November 21, 2024*

USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants

The USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants program supports eligible communities prepare, or recover from, an emergency that threatens the availability of safe, reliable drinking water. Eligible applicants must show a decline in quantity or quality of water that occurred within two years of the date of the application or that a significant decline in quality or quantity of water is imminent. The award range is \$150,000-\$1 million. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

**Rolling application window open*

USDA Water & Wastewater Disposal Predevelopment Planning Grants

The USDA Water & Wastewater Disposal Predevelopment Planning Grants program helps eligible low-income communities plan and develop applications for proposed USDA Rural Development water or waste disposal projects. Partnerships with other federal, state and local entities are encouraged, and grants are awarded only when the applicant cannot afford to borrow the needed funds. The award ceiling is \$30,000. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

**Rolling application window open*

Partner Resources

Pollinator Habitat Workshop with US Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS)

Join the Porter County Soil and Water Conservation District for a presentation from Jared

O'Brien, of the FWS, on establishing pollinator habitat on Tuesday, June 11 from 6:00-7:30 pm at Meadow Brook Nature Preserve at 109 West 700 North, Valparaiso. RSVP to Jacob Tosch at jacob.tosch@in.nacdn.net or 219-462-7515 ext. 3.

Great Lakes Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Center (TCTAC) Grant Database

This new grant database is intended to make searching for federal funding opportunities much easier. It is user friendly and pulls information from 10 federal agencies participating in the Thriving Communities program every 24 hours to help applicants find opportunities most relevant to their needs. Check out TCTAC Grants Database [here](#).

Community Navigators Program

Coalitions and Collaboratives (COCO) is partnering with the US Forest Service and a team of national and regional nonprofits to deliver Community Navigator services. Community Navigators support community-based partners to access federal funding opportunities, create partnerships, and build capacity for wildfire risk mitigation and climate resilience. Learn more about the Community Navigators program [here](#).

EPA "Stormwater Smart" Outreach Tools

The Stormwater Smart collection includes brochures, infographics, one-pagers, and social media posts to educate the public, and is now available in Spanish. Learn more [here](#).

EPA Small Drinking Water Systems Webinar Series: Harmful Algal Blooms webinar recording

This webinar presents a brief, small-scale case study of a state-level Algal Toxin program from its inception onward, including topics such as an overview of the rule's regulatory language, toxin selection and health limits, implementation, challenges and other resources/information. To learn more and view the webinar, click [here](#).

EPA Co-Benefits Risk Assessment Health Impacts Screening and Mapping Tool (COBRA)

EPA recently released version 5.0. of COBRA, a free tool to help state and local governments explore how changes in air pollution from clean energy policies and programs can affect human health at the county, state, regional or national levels. COBRA can also help state and local governments estimate the economic value of the health benefits associated with clean energy policies and programs and map the air quality, human health and health-related economic benefits from reducing air pollution. To explore COBRA, click [here](#).

EPA Environmental Justice (EJ) Clearinghouse

The EJ Clearinghouse is a public, whole-of-government clearinghouse composed of culturally and linguistically appropriate and accessible materials related to environmental justice to assist EJ partners. EPA's Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights will continue to add information to the clearinghouse on a rolling basis and welcomes input and any submissions from the public for review and potential inclusion. To view or submit to the EJ Clearinghouse, click [here](#).

American Conservation and Stewardship Atlas

This digital Atlas helps illustrate and document locally led, partnership-driven conservation and restoration work that is underway in communities across America. This beta version of the Atlas brings together science, data and knowledge on biodiversity, climate change impacts and equity to help the restoration efforts of individuals, land managers, policymakers and communities. To view the Atlas, click [here](#).

EPA Report on the Environment (ROE) Training Webinar

This webinar, recorded on April 4, 2024, highlights EPA's Report on the Environment, or ROE. ROE brings together the most reliable and readily available indicators to create a comprehensive view of the nation's environmental and human health status and trends. This webinar highlights the ROE program history, future vision and the interactive ROE website, home to the 80+ ROE scientific indicators. To view the webinar or access a PDF of the presentation, click [here](#).

Source Water Collaborative Learning Exchange

The Source Water Collaborative Learning Exchange is designed to help water

stakeholders use the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding for source water protection. It highlights types of source water protection and green infrastructure projects eligible for funding. To view Source Water Collaborative BIL resources click [here](#).

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

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