



Save the Date! The Quarterly Meeting of the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership is Scheduled for Thursday, October 19

Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership Meeting
Thursday, October 19, 2023
9:30-11:30am CST

This meeting will be held in-person with a virtual call-in option available as per the details below.

Portage Lakefront and Riverwalk Pavilion

100 Riverwalk Dr, Portage, IN 46368

View location on the map [here](#).

Parking fees will be waived for meeting participants



Join Zoom Meeting

Meeting ID: 914 4655 0596

Passcode: 054879

Dial by your location

+1 646 931 3860 US

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

Find your local number: <https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/91446550596>

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. Partner Presentation: "Biodiversity Goals and Pollinator Habitat on NIPSCO Right-of-Ways," Steve Barker, Environmental Principal, NIPSCO
4. Partner Presentation: "Application of Environmental DNA (eDNA) in Restoration and Conservation Ecology," Murulee Byappanahalli, Research Microbiologist, US Geological Survey Great Lakes Science Center
5. Partner Updates & Announcements

Questions? Please reach out to [Victoria Wittig](#),
the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership Ambassador.

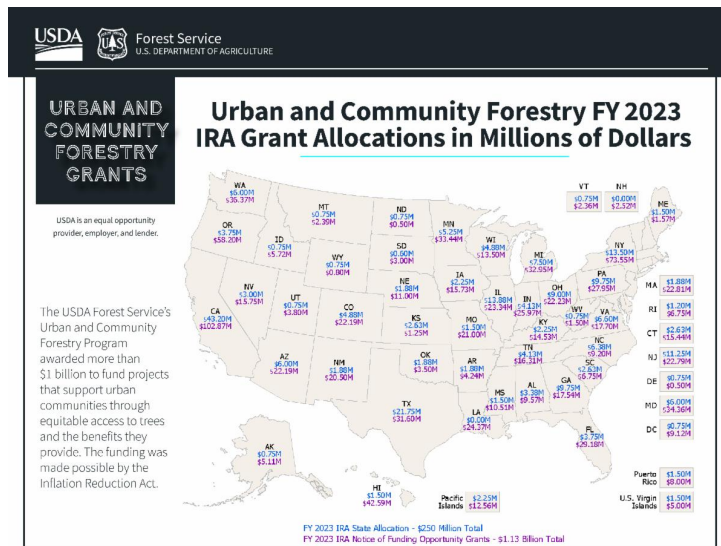
US Forest Service Announces Urban and Community Forestry Grant Awards

Trees make a difference. Studies show that communities with access to trees and green spaces are associated with improved health outcomes, reduced crime, lower average temperatures, and an influx of other kinds of investments and new economic opportunities. Through funding from the Inflation Reduction Act, the [Forest Service is making historic investments](#) in boosting the nation's tree cover in urban, suburban and rural communities nationwide. The agency has selected 385

grant proposals from entities that are working to increase equitable access to trees and green spaces, and the many benefits they provide. 100% of funding will flow to disadvantaged communities, and funded proposals are located in all 50 states, two U.S. territories, three U.S. affiliated Pacific islands, and in several tribal communities.

In Northwest Indiana, awards were made to Michigan City (\$1,000,000), South Bend (\$1,867,730), and the City of LaPorte Wastewater Division (\$1,000,000) for tree planting and maintenance, workforce development and more. The Student Conservation Association received \$8,000,000 for pass-through grant programs, including support for their work in Northwest Indiana. Congratulations to all awardees!

View the full list of grant awards by state and pass-through entity [here](#).



New American Climate Corps Initiative

[The American Climate Corps](#) is a workforce training and service initiative that will ensure more young people have access to the skills-based training necessary for good-paying careers in the clean energy and climate resilience economy.

The American Climate Corps will mobilize a new, diverse generation of more than 20,000 Americans – putting them to work conserving and restoring our lands and waters, bolstering community resilience, deploying clean energy, implementing energy efficient technologies, and advancing environmental justice, all while creating pathways to high-quality, good-paying clean energy and climate resilience jobs in the public and private sectors after they complete their paid training program. Learn more [here](#).



US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Partners Celebrate the

11th Year of SepticSmart Week

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program and its federal, State, and local partners participated in the 11th annual [EPA SepticSmart Week](#) education and outreach programming efforts this past September 18-22, 2023.

An estimated 33,033 households across the Indiana Lake Michigan watershed depend on septic systems to treat their wastewater. Failure to maintain a septic system can lead to backups and overflows. This can result in costly repairs, polluted lakes and waterways, and risks to public health and the environment. Don't fall victim to a failed system. Learn more about what you can do to stay Septic Smart [here](#).



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](#) to discuss your projects and ways we can help.

[US Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Forest Service Landscape Scale Restoration \(LSR\) Program 2024 - Northeast and Midwest](#)

The purpose of LSR Program is to encourage collaborative, science-based restoration of priority forest landscapes, leverage public and private resources, and support priorities identified in State Forest Action Plans. Program outcomes include: Improve fish and wildlife habitat; improve water quality and watershed function; mitigate invasive plants, insect infestation, and disease; reduce wildfire risk; improve forest ecosystem health; and measure ecological and economic benefits. Register for the Applicant Webinar on September 6th from 1:00-2:00 CT, [here](#). View the RFA, [here](#).

*Award Range: \$25,000-\$600,000

*Letter of Intent Due: October 5, 2023

*Applications Due: November 30, 2023

[Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program Grants](#)

Lake Michigan Coastal Grant funding is available to communities and organizations seeking out social, economic, and environmental solutions that promote partnerships and balance the use and protection of the Lake Michigan coast's valuable, yet fragile, resources. Eligible grant applicants include municipalities, county parks, educational institutions, planning and development agencies, soil and water conservation districts, transit agencies, marinas, and some non-profits. View Pre-proposal Guidelines [here](#).

*Award Range: \$50,000-\$400,000 (depending on program area)

*Pre-proposals Due: October 6, 2023

*Match: 1:1 Match Required

[National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\) Fisheries Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants](#)

Nearly \$175 million in funding is available for fish passage projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. This funding will support projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish around the country. In collaboration with NOAA, selected partners will use these funds to implement locally-led removals of dams and other in-stream barriers. Eligible applicants are

institutions of higher education, non-profits, commercial (for profit) organizations, U.S. territories, and state, local and tribal governments. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$1,000,000-\$20,000,000

*Proposals Due: October 16, 2023

[US Bureau of Reclamation \(USBR\) WaterSMART Planning and Project Design Grants](#)

The USBR is providing funding for collaborative projects that support water management planning and design including improving water supplies, improving water management and comprehensive drought contingency plans. To view the NOFO, click [here](#).

*Award Maximum: \$400,000

*Applications Due: October 17, 2023

[US Army Corps of Engineers Section 165\(a\) Pilot Program for Water Resources Projects for Small or Disadvantaged Communities](#)

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is launching a pilot program to fully fund small water resources projects for economically disadvantaged communities. Project proposals under this pilot program are for projects under the Continuing Authorities Program that allow the Corps to plan, design, and implement water resources projects without additional project specific congressional authorization. To learn more, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$500,000-\$12.5 million

*Project Proposals Due: October 20, 2023

[USDA Forest Service Great Lakes Restoration Initiative \(GLRI\) Forest Restoration Grant](#)

The GLRI was launched in 2010 to accelerate efforts to protect and restore one of the largest systems of fresh surface water in the world—the Great Lakes. As one of 16 GLRI regional working group members, the US Forest Service awards competitive grants to assist organizations and communities who are taking creative approaches to improve habitats and water quality. The US Forest Service is anticipating awarding more than 5 million in new funds for mitigating forest insect and disease impacts, reducing runoff from degraded sites through green infrastructure and restoring and connecting coastal and riparian forest habitats in the Great Lakes Basin. To learn more, click [here](#). To view the RFA, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$50,000-\$300,000

*Applications Due: October 23, 2023

[USDA Forest Service GLRI Cooperative Weed Management Grant](#)

The Forest Service anticipates that \$1.25M in new funds are expected to be available for the Fiscal Year 2023 GLRI Cooperative Weed Management Areas grant program. The goal of this program is to detect, prevent, eradicate, and/or control invasive plant species to promote resiliency, watershed stability, and biological diversity on Federal, State, or other public or private land. To view the RFA, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$25,000-\$100,000

*Applications Due: October 23, 2023

[USBR WaterSMART Drought Response Program: Drought Resiliency Projects](#)

The USBR Drought Response Program invites eligible applicants to submit proposals for projects that can increase water management flexibility as part of preparing for and addressing the impacts of drought and water supply shortages. To view the NOFO, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$25,000-\$5,000,000

*Applications Due: October 31, 2023

[US EPA Environmental Education \(EE\) Grants](#)

Under the EE Grants Program, EPA seeks applications from eligible entities to support environmental education projects that promote environmental awareness and stewardship and help provide people with the skills to take responsible actions to protect the environment. This grant program provides financial support for projects that design, demonstrate or disseminate environmental education practices, methods or techniques.

Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations. To learn more about eligibility and how to apply, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$50,000-\$100,000

*Applications Due: November 8, 2023

[US Department of Transportation Thriving Communities Program](#)

The Thriving Communities Program (TCP) provides technical assistance, planning and capacity building support to teams of community partners that may lack the staffing or technical expertise to scope, fund and develop infrastructure projects that advance broader community goals. TCP will provide two years of deep-dive assistance and three years of facilitated peer learning support to selected communities to help them plan and develop a pipeline of comprehensive transportation, housing and community revitalization activities. Interested applicants must identify community partners and together submit a [Letter of Interest](#). To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$1,000,000-\$5,000,000

*Letter of Interest Due: November 15, 2023

[NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants](#)

Projects selected through this funding opportunity will have a transformative impact for coastal communities and tribes across the country. They will help sustain our nation's fisheries, make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and help protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. They will support efforts such as reconnecting rivers to their historic floodplains, outplanting corals to rebuild reefs, building living shorelines that protect coasts from erosion and sea level rise, and more. To view the NOFO, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$1-\$25 million

*Applications Due: November 17, 2023

[NOAA Climate Ready Workforce for Coastal and Great Lakes States, Tribes and Territories Initiatives](#)

NOAA's Climate Program Office, Office for Coastal Management and National Sea Grant Office will assist communities in coastal and Great Lakes states, territories and tribes so they may form partnerships that train workers and place them into jobs that enhance climate resilience. This opportunity is open to state, tribal, territorial and local governments, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations in coastal states or territories. To learn more about eligibility and the application process, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$500,000-\$5 million

*Letters of Intent Due: November 30, 2023

[USBR WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program \(CWMP\)](#)

The USBR 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. To view the program factsheet, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$10,000-\$300,000

*First Round Applications Due: December 5, 2023

[NOAA Coastal Habitat Restoration and Resilience Grants for Tribes and Underserved Communities](#)

\$45 million in funding is available for projects that will advance the coastal habitat restoration and climate resilience priorities of tribes and underserved communities under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. Through this funding, NOAA will help support community-driven habitat restoration and build the capacity of Tribes and underserved communities to more fully participate in restoration activities. To learn more about eligibility and the application process, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$75,000-\$3,000,000

*Applications Due: December 19, 2023

[USDA Forest Service Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program](#)

This competitive grant program provides financial assistance to Indian Tribes, local governments and qualified conservation non-profit organizations to establish community forests through the fee simple acquisition of private forest land. To apply, interested local government and nonprofit applicants must submit applications to the State Forester where the property is located. To view the RFA, click [here](#).

*Award Maximum: \$600,000

*Applications Due: January 12, 2023

[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. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

*Award Range: \$150,000-\$1 million

*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.

*Award Maximum: \$30,000

*Rolling application window open

Student Conservation Association Volunteer Tree Planting Opportunities

[Student Conservation Association \(SCA\) Tree Planting Volunteer Opportunities](#)

Calling all tree stewards, advocates and CommuniTree supporters! The SCA is hosting four volunteer tree planting opportunities throughout the month of October. Register for one or all of the dates via the links below.

- Oct. 7 - <https://bit.ly/48eYUYy>
- Oct. 14 - <https://bit.ly/3sXquJT>
- Oct. 21 - <https://bit.ly/3LlySZF>
- Oct. 28 - <https://bit.ly/3sXvspX>



Partner Resources

[Tribal Engagement Training for Conservation Practitioners in North America](#)

The Nature Conservancy is partner to an opportunity to help conservationists work better with Native American tribes and other Indigenous Peoples. The result of this collaboration is a tuition-free, self-paced training for learners interested in gaining foundational knowledge to use in working and collaborating with tribes. Access the "Indiana Country

101" Curricula [here](#).

[White House Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Technical Assistance Guide](#)

The White House Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Technical Assistance Guide includes a list of over 65 technical assistance resources and programs across the federal government to help communities deliver infrastructure projects. The guide is organized by types of infrastructure investments such as transportation, clean energy and power, high-speed internet, water, resilience, and environmental remediation.

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

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