



**FRIENDS OF THE
CHICAGO RIVER:
Winner - The Waterfront
Center Clear Water
Award 2020**

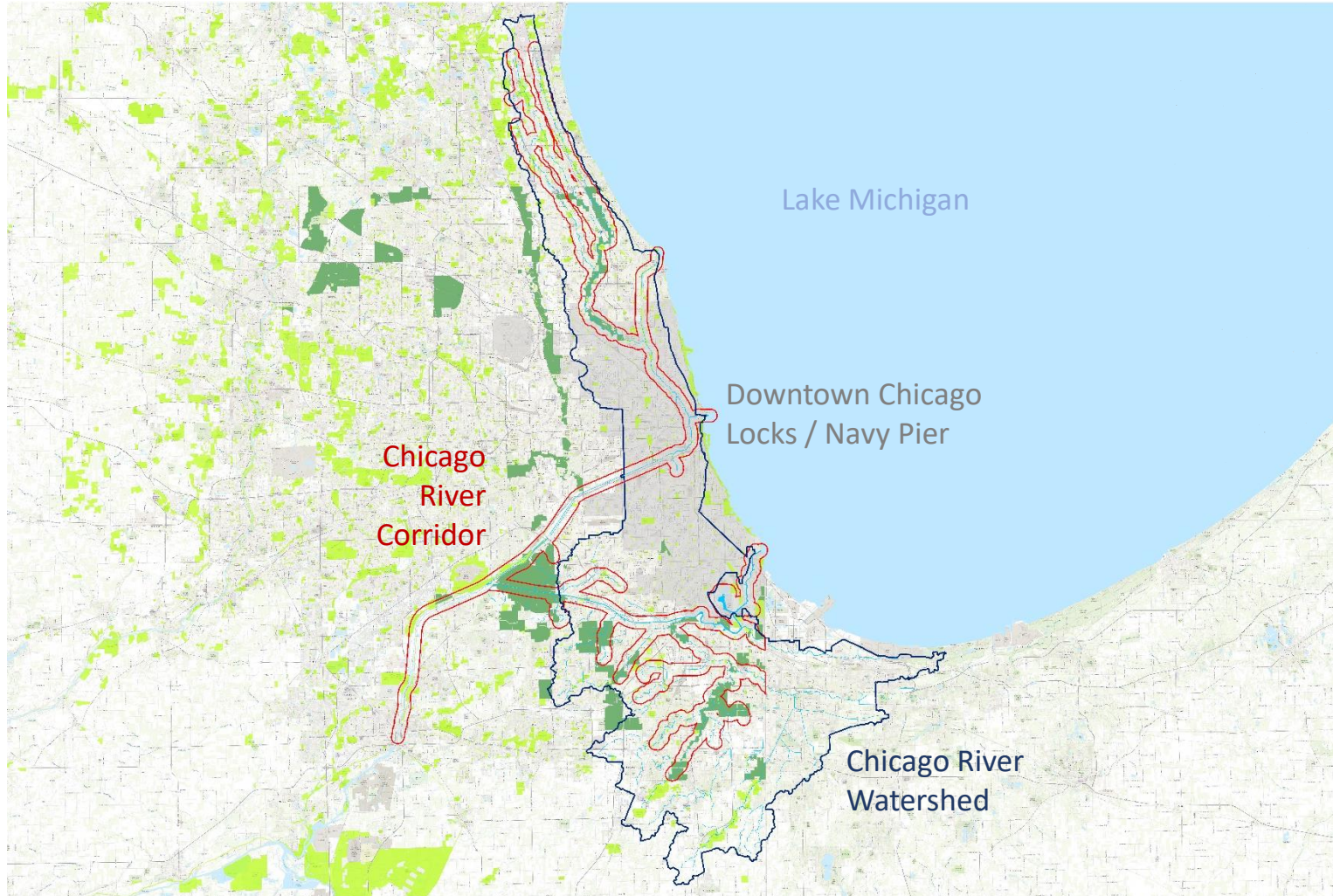
Presented By:

Margaret Frisbie

Executive Director

Friends of the Chicago River

Friends of the Chicago River

- 156 mile river corridor
- Hundreds of species of birds, more than 70 species of fish, turtles, beavers, bats, muskrats, coyotes including dozens of endangered plants and animals
- 9.5 million people in the metro area

OUR CHICAGO RIVER

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URBAN CANYONS AND INDUSTRY

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FORESTS, PRAIRIES, AND WETLANDS

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ALL KINDS OF WILDLIFE

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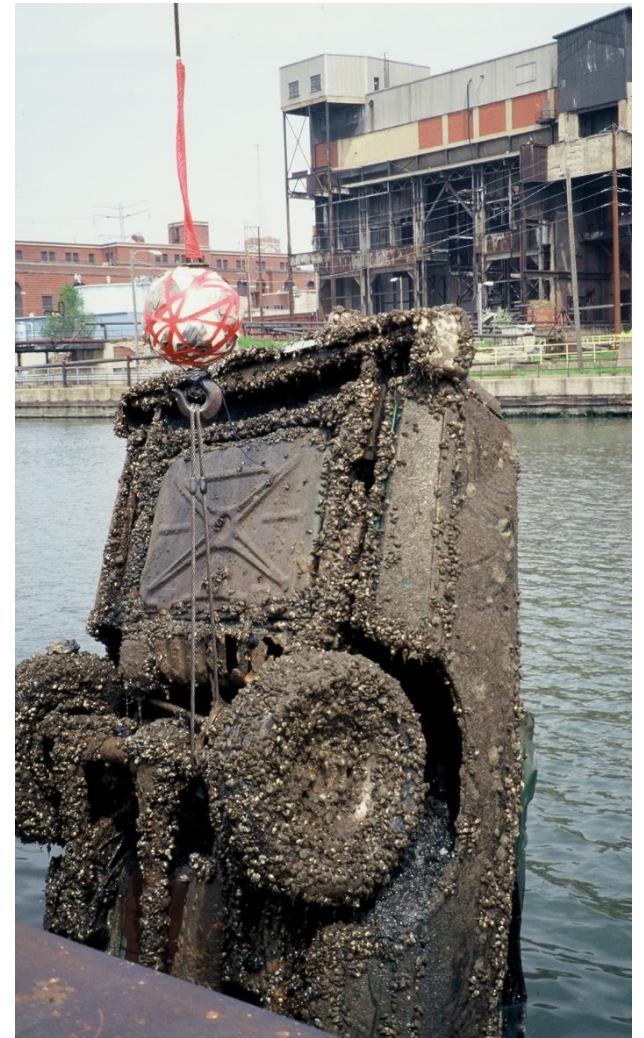
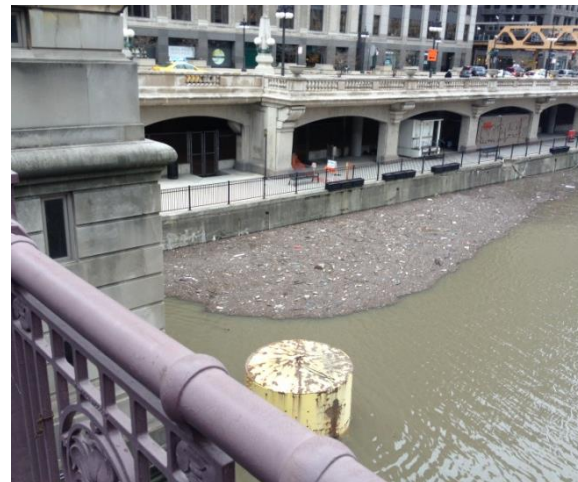
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ENGINEERED FOR SHIPPING AND SEWAGE

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AND POLLUTED

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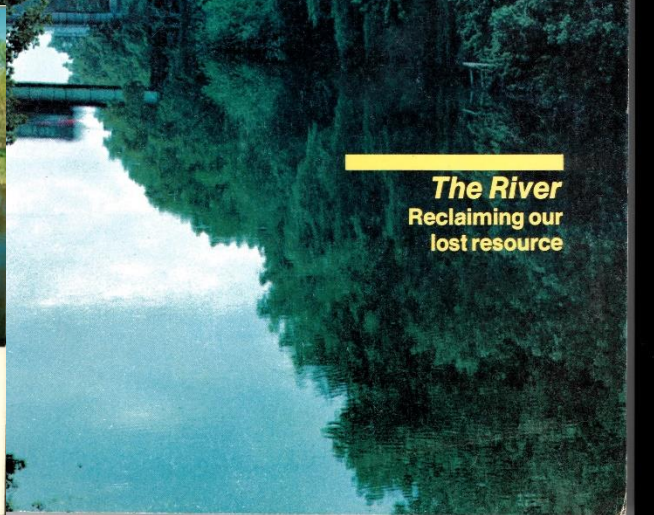
Chicago

Our friendless river

Decades of abuse and neglect have transformed the Chicago River from a great natural resource into an open sewer. A professional planner exalts its potential virtues and tells us how it can be made vital once again.

by Robert Cassidy Photography by Dan Morris

The Chicago River is the city's most neglected natural resource. In its course through the heart of the city, it is surrounded by skyscrapers, parking lots, and industrial plants. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's water supply. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's sewer system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's park system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's transportation system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's economic system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's cultural system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's political system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's social system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's religious system. 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It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's hospitality system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's food and beverage system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's retail system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's service system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's industry system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's agriculture system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's forestry system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's fishing and hunting system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's outdoor recreation system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's cultural heritage system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's historical system. 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It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's time system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's energy system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's information system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's communication system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's transportation system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's utility system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's infrastructure system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's public system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's private system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's government system. It is the only river in the city that is not a part of the city's non-government system. 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IN 1979, FRIENDLESS NO MORE
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EDUCATION + OUTREACH



ON-THE-GROUND PROJECTS



POLICY + PLANNING

ACTION AND ADVOCACY

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EDUCATION AND OUTREACH CHALLENGES:

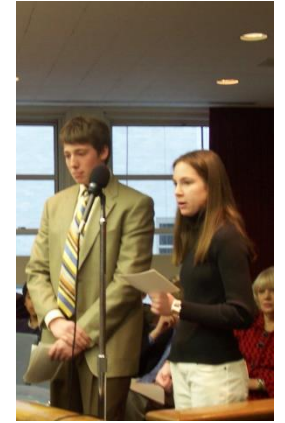
- Negative perception of the river
- Lack of opportunities to experience urban nature
- Barriers to river recreation and access

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EDUCATION AND OUTREACH TODAY



40 YEARS OF ADVOCACY

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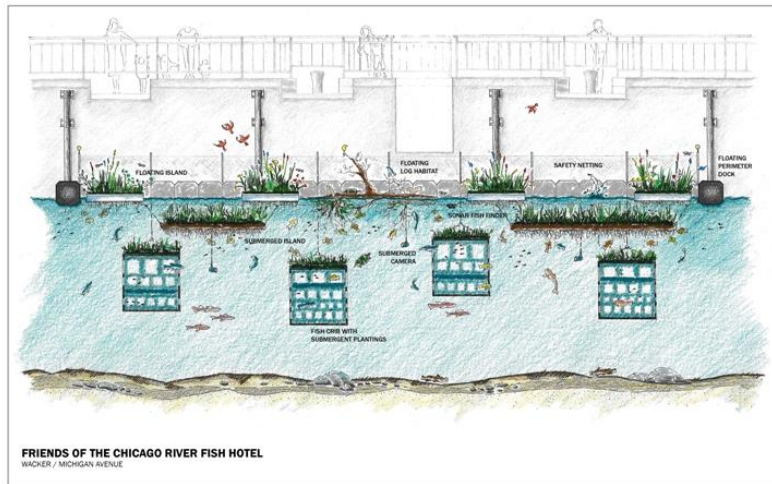
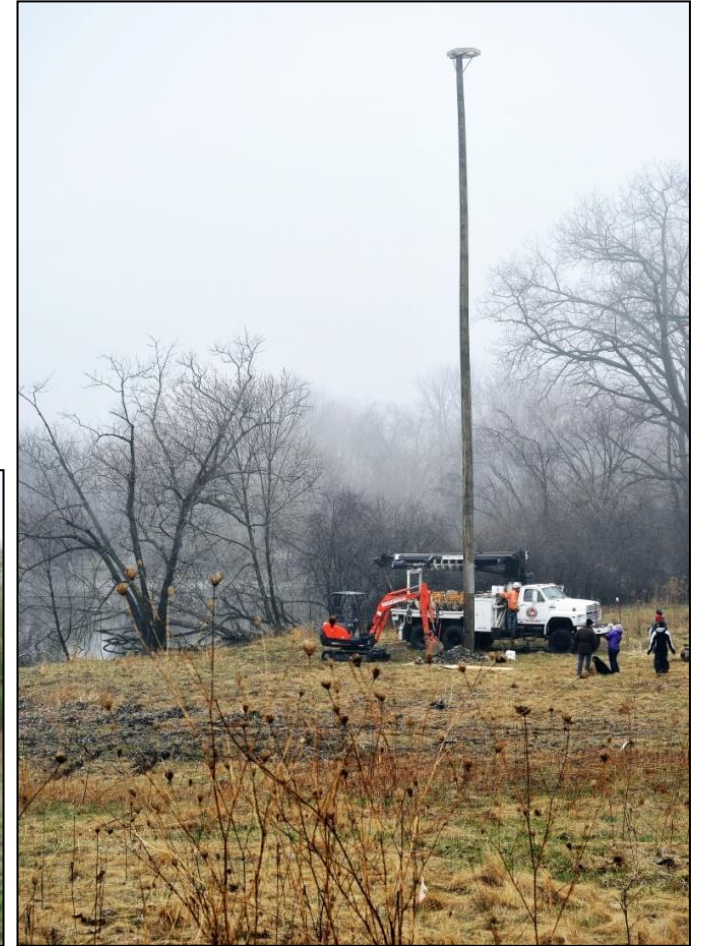
## HABITAT DEGRADATION CHALLENGES:

- Lack of habitat
- Invasive plants
- Fragmentation
- Dams
- Erosion

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# HABITAT TODAY



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## RIVER-EDGE DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES:

- Poor planning
- Lack of landscaping or habitat
- River as back door design practices
- No public access

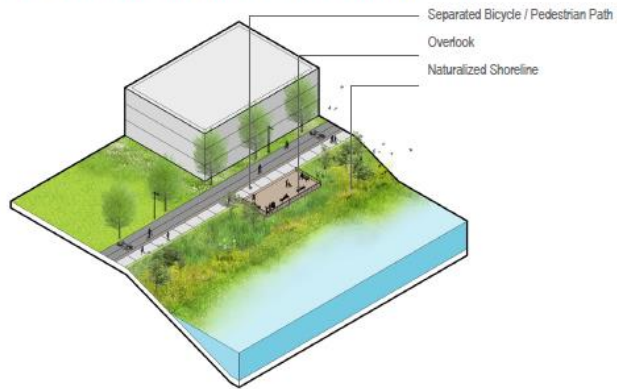
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**Friends of the Chicago River**  
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RIVER EDGE DEVELOPMENT TODAY

Figure 4.3: Overlook on Sloped Bank with Naturalized Treatment

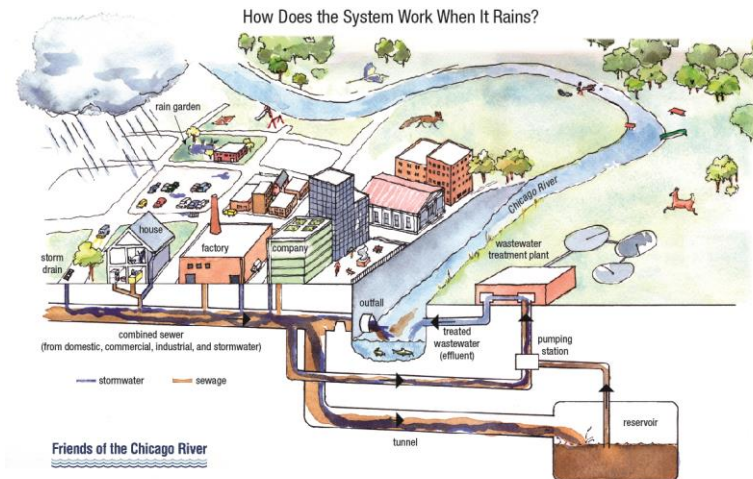


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WATER QUALITY CHALLENGES:

- Combined Sewer Overflows
- Polluted Stormwater Run-off
- Litter
- Phosphorus



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The logo for Friends of the Chicago River, featuring the text "Friends of the Chicago River" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with three wavy blue lines underneath representing water.

WATER QUALITY TODAY



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   [www.chicagoriver.org](http://www.chicagoriver.org)



# THANK YOU!

**THE TRANSFORMATION CONTINUES**

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