

# URBANWATERS

FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

*Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities*

## Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) Supporting the Urban Waters Federal Partnership

May 12, 2015



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# URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP



## Introduction

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) seeks to reconnect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by building collaboration among federal agencies, state and local agencies and community-led efforts to promote economic, environmental and social benefits. The Partnership includes 14 Federal agencies implementing the Vision, Mission and Principles described on pages 4 and 5.

In support of the UWFP, 28 NGOs signed a support letter on December 3, 2014 (see pages 6-8) pledging to work with the Partnership to achieve the Vision, Mission and Principles.

This report simply describes, in their words, how the 28 NGOs are working in urban areas with activities that could link to UWFP actions now occurring. By making this report public on [urbanwaters.gov](http://urbanwaters.gov), the UWFP intends for all of the NGOs, all 14 Agencies that make up the UWFP, and all 19 UWFP designated locations to understand generally what urban work actions the NGOs are currently taking. These descriptions will therefore increase the likelihood that collaboration among all organizations will proceed with better information about what is being done now and possibly what opportunities exist.

For each organization, the report summarizes their major activities within the communities they serve. These major urban activities include, but are not limited to, river cleanups, green infrastructure installation, connecting citizens to parks and green spaces, establishing new networks with local government officials, creating new bike trails and riverfront walkways, and engaging residents to be urban waters stewards for their watershed.

In the near future, the 28 NGOs, the 14 UWFP agencies and the 19 UWFP designated locations will be developing more defined plans regarding collaboration. Such collaborative efforts will be built upon the activities described in this report, and may, in fact, lead to further creative actions in addition to those currently being implemented. As these new collaborations unfold, the UWFP will ensure that they are fully described and made available on [www.urbanwaters.gov](http://www.urbanwaters.gov).

# URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

## VISION, MISSION & PRINCIPLES



### OUR VISION

*Through our partnership, we will revitalize urban waters and the communities that surround them, transforming overlooked assets into treasured centerpieces and drivers of urban revival.*



### THE NEED IS CLEAR

*Many of our nation's urban rivers, streams, lakes, forests and wetlands are polluted, degraded or inaccessible. The surrounding communities often are not reaping the environmental, economic and social benefits that living near a water body can provide.*

*Research demonstrates that a clean, safe, accessible, urban environment – including urban forests, gardens, parks, lakes, aquifers, and rivers – is directly linked to improved public health, stronger local economies, and lower crime rates.*

*We believe a deeper connection to local water bodies can bring a new cycle of community hope and energy that will lead to healthier urban waters, improved public health, strengthened local businesses, and new jobs, as well as expanded educational, recreational, housing, and social opportunities.*



### OUR MISSION

*The "Urban Waters Federal Partnership" will help urban and metropolitan areas, particularly those that are under-served or economically distressed, connect with their waterways and work to improve them. This federal partnership will put communities first. We will work to break down government program silos and to ensure that our collective efforts will reverse past neglect, energize existing programs, and engage new partners. We will listen to, engage and serve the communities where we work, ensuring they are full partners in restoring and protecting the water that surrounds them. We will establish strong partnerships with effective community-based organizations and local government officials to make the most effective use of economic incentives and other beneficial actions. With the right set of federal, state, and local tools and the local commitment of political will, the partnership will leverage existing neighborhood assets. These actions will be geared to promote early and visible victories to fuel long-term action. Success will advance the missions of our partnership, our agencies, and the federal government as a whole.*



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### *To guide our work, we will:*

- **Promote clean urban waters.** We must enhance the value and health of urban waters, recognizing their rich history, spiritual value, natural beauty, and economic and recreational potential, as well as their role in basic services, such as water supplies. We know clean water is a foundation for sustainable communities and healthy ecosystems, and that the watershed is the fundamental planning unit for water quality protection. That means the Partnership will work with urban communities to connect them to upstream areas including rural parts of the watersheds, where the large majority of our country's water originates. In addition to addressing the direct challenges presented by physically, chemically and biologically degraded urban waters, we will engage these communities in the broader process of enhancing the value and quality of water resources supplying urban areas using approaches to protect, manage and restore the lands that surround those waters.
- **Reconnect people to their waterways.** Many communities do not have access to their urban waterways. This cuts them off from a valuable community asset. These assets can be used to spur commercial, recreational (such as parks, green spaces and cultural centers) and educational opportunities. Indeed, the reconnection of distressed communities to their waterways can act as a catalyst for greater economic revitalization and growth as well as improvement in resident well-being.
- **Water conservation.** We shall strive to meet urban water needs in a sustainable manner by increasing the efficiency of water use. The Partnership therefore will strive to educate and work with urban communities to conserve this precious resource. We will increase efforts to address infrastructure needs, especially in underserved urban areas where modernization of aging and inefficient infrastructure can lead to significant water savings. We believe conserving water and using it wisely will be fundamental to our success.
- **Use urban water systems as a way to promote economic revitalization and prosperity.** Healthy and accessible urban waters enhance any area's economic competitiveness. In urban communities, water-related environmental improvements will be integrated with other community priorities, such as revitalizing local businesses, creating jobs, and improving access to job training. Community revitalization through the promotion of clean urban waters must minimize displacement of existing residents, expand opportunities for current and new residents, and fully tap into the potential of the local and regional communities. To achieve these objectives when working locally, the Partnership will particularly focus on revitalizing communities that are, or have been, disproportionately impacted by pollution or economic burdens.
- **Encourage community improvements through active partnerships.** Strong multi-agency partnerships at the federal, state, local levels, and with the tribes, will integrate many of the services needed for community revitalization. Aligning federal policies and funding will break down traditional silos, remove barriers to collaboration, and increase the accountability and effectiveness to plan and act for future growth. These goals will also be achieved through innovative regional collaboration and approaches that connect policies and programs at every level of government and across multiple sectors.
- **Be open and honest, and listening to the communities is the best way to engage them.** We will work with urban populations, not act for them. This means, among other things, to recognize their values and seek to understand environmental issues through their eyes. We will work from the bottom up rather than taking a top down, one-size-fits-all approach.
- **Focus on measuring results and evaluation will fuel future success.** We need short-term improvements, but also an analytical view toward sustainable and systemic improvements we can measure using meaningful outcome measures. We will invest and focus our resources on what is working in targeted places and draw on the compounding effect of well-coordinated action. By evaluating conditions to design better solutions and monitoring progress to respond quickly when change is needed, we will learn what works to develop best practices.

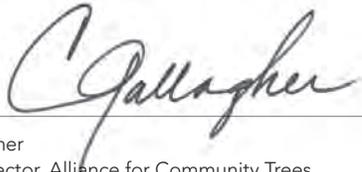
## Aligning Our Efforts: New NGO and Association Partners

We, the undersigned organizations, support the vision, mission, and principles of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. We commend the work that is making a visible difference in communities across the country by engaging urban populations in restoring their rivers and surrounding neighborhoods, improving access for water recreation, and helping create a network of parks and greenspaces connecting downtown cores with suburban and rural areas. We believe the Partnership provides a powerful means for federal agencies to better connect with our metropolitan areas and engage all residents—especially youth—in conservation and stewardship of nature where they live, work, and play.

Supporting actions we plan to undertake include aligning resources, funding, and expertise to restore urban waters, parks, and greenspaces; increase outdoor recreation; engage youth and residents at pilot sites; and create new initiatives or projects nationally or at the state or local levels that achieve complementary results. We look forward to assisting federal agency partners with outreach and communications encouraging urban waters restoration, parks and greenspace conservation, and outdoor recreation.



# SIGNATURES



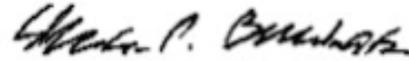
Carrie Gallagher  
Executive Director, Alliance for Community Trees



Lisa Bardwell  
President, Earth Force



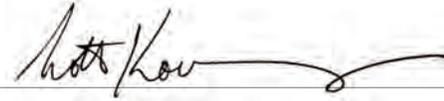
Scott Steen  
President, American Forests



Stephen H. Burrington  
Executive Director, Groundwork USA



James M. Diman, J.D.  
Executive Director, American Planning Association



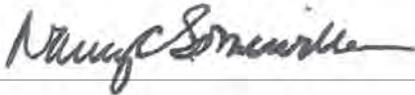
Scott Kovarovics  
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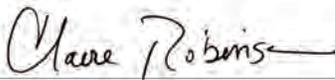
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Nancy C. Somerville  
CEO & Executive Vice President,  
American Society of Landscape Architects



Barbara Tulipane  
President & CEO, National Recreation and Park Association



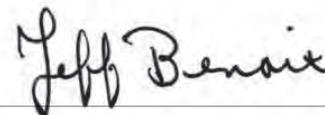
Claire Robinson  
Executive Director, Amigos de los Rios



Collin O'Mara  
President, National Wildlife Federation



Dan Lambe  
President, Arbor Day Foundation



Jeffrey Benoit  
President & CEO, Restore America's Estuaries



Catherine Nagel  
Executive Director, City Parks Alliance

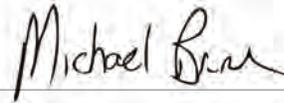


Nicole Silk  
President, River Network

# SIGNATURES



Daniel van Starrenburg  
President & CEO, SavATree



Michael Brune  
Executive Director, Sierra Club



Jerri J. LaHaie  
Executive Director, Society of Municipal Arborists



Will Rogers  
President & CEO, The Trust for Public Land



Joel Dunn  
President, The Chesapeake Conservancy



Mark Garvin  
President & CEO, Tree Care Industry Association



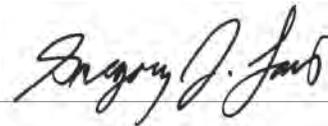
Lawrence A. Selzer  
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Greg J. Lais  
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John F. Calvelli  
Executive Vice President of Public Affairs,  
Wildlife Conservation Society

As required by the Antideficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. 1341 and 1342, all commitments made by all agencies party to this Partnership agreement are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and budget priorities. Nothing in this agreement, in and of itself, obligates any agency to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations. Any transaction involving transfers of funds between the agencies will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written agreements. Furthermore, this agreement does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity, by persons who are not party to this agreement, against any party to this agreement, its officers or employees, or any other person. Finally, this agreement does not impose legally binding requirements on any Federal agency, States or the regulated community, nor does it change or substitute for any existing legally binding requirements.

# Alliance for Community Trees

<http://actrees.org/>



## Overview

Founded in 1993, Alliance for Community Trees (ACTrees) is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the health and livability of cities by planting and caring for trees. Today, ACTrees is a growing coalition of more than 200 organizations involved in grassroots community greening, public education, policymaking, and other activities supporting better urban forest stewardship.

ACTrees engages volunteers to take action to improve the environment where over 90% of people live: in cities, towns, and metropolitan areas. ACTrees member organizations have planted and cared for more than 15 million trees with help from more than 5 million volunteers.

## Mission

Alliance for Community Trees builds the capacity of its members to plant, sustain, and advocate for trees in America's communities. To achieve its mission, ACTrees has established three results-oriented strategic goals. ACTrees will:

- SERVE a broad, diverse, and highly engaged network of members, partners, and volunteers.
- INFLUENCE public policy and research to advance sustainable urban and community forests.
- BUILD organizational excellence and capacity to support national programs and enhance member impact.

## Vision

Alliance for Community Trees envisions green, healthy, interconnected, and prosperous communities transformed through tree planting, care, education, and advocacy.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

ACTrees supports projects and programs aimed at protecting, enhancing, and sustaining trees in urban communities across the country.

**Baltimore, Maryland:** In 2013, ACTrees and partner Boise Inc., transformed an under-utilized space in an urban Baltimore neighborhood into a vibrant community park. The once vacant lot was cleared of 18 abandoned row houses and now offers the many benefits of trees and green space – cleaner air, shade, less water pollution, and higher property values – to the neighborhood. A total of 24 new large trees were planted, including elm, honey locust, willow oak, and crape myrtle. Hundreds of smaller plants and shrubs were planted by more than 50 volunteers, and local nonprofit and government partners. In addition to trees and several planting beds, the park's walking path and small parking area are made of pervious concrete to help reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality.

In September 2014, ACTrees and railway company CSX completed the 1812 Trees Initiative, a multi-year campaign to plant 1,812 trees in Baltimore. The initiative honors the bicentennial celebration of America's national anthem, which was written in Baltimore during the War of 1812. Volunteers from CSX and ACTrees' partner, the Parks & People Foundation, began the initiative in the fall of 2012. The ongoing partnership between ACTrees and CSX promotes urban and community tree planting, care, conservation, and education, while improving the environment and making Baltimore a cleaner and greener place to live.

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** As part of its Community Groves grant program, ACTrees funded the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) to plant, maintain, and harvest fruit and nut trees at Saul Agricultural High School in Philadelphia. In 2013, more than 200 Saul Agricultural High School students helped with planting and irrigation of the urban orchard. The fruit and nut trees will provide fresh food for the community and create a greener and healthier community. The orchard also features educational signs for each of the crops and now serves as a life lab that engages students in science and horticulture.

# American Forests

<http://www.americanforests.org/>



## Overview

American Forests, the oldest national nonprofit conservation organization in the country, protects and restores urban and rural forests. Founded in 1875, American Forests has served as a catalyst for many of the most important milestones in the conservation movement, including the founding of the U.S. Forest Service, the national forest and national park systems, and thousands of forest ecosystem restoration projects and public education efforts. Since 1990, American Forests has planted nearly 50 million trees in forests throughout the U.S. and in 44 countries, resulting in cleaner air and drinking water, restored habitat for wildlife and fish, and the removal of millions of tons of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

The organization's work is guided by science to identify the right mix of trees in particular locations for goals ranging from wildlife habitat to urban spaces that maximize benefits to public health, ecosystem services, and storm resilience. American Forests also advocates through federal, state, and urban policymakers, seeking to show that the ecological value of trees and forests translates into the triple bottom line of real social, environmental, and economic value.

## Mission

American Forests works to restore threatened forest ecosystems and inspire people to value and protect urban and wild land forests.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

American Forests' urban initiatives foster high-impact innovation and integration with other disciplines, so that green infrastructure can be used to build truly sustainable urban environments. Their flagship urban program, Community ReLeaf, helps cities build long-term capacity for restoring and managing their urban forests. With a goal of engaging 20 cities by 2020, each long-term collaboration includes three initial phases: an urban tree canopy analysis using i-Tree and high resolution imagery, strategic land restoration projects through tree planting and high-impact site design, and outreach to engage residents and local policymakers.

Additionally, American Forests provides small cost-share grants through its Global ReLeaf program to leverage community resources for tree planting projects in urban areas. These projects can include streamside forest buffers, street trees, and open space plantings in spaces such as parks and vacant lots.

American Forests also develops national communication resources to help communities learn from one another. For example, *Urban Forests Case Studies: Challenges, Potential and Success in a Dozen Cities*, a 108-page book in both print and online formats, highlights urban forest activities, innovations, management structures, best practices, and obstacles in various U.S. cities, including Urban Waters Federal Partnership cities. For the *10 Best Cities for Urban Forests* project, a panel of expert judges identified cities that best exemplify healthy urban forests. American Forests then provided detailed information about urban forests in each of the 10 cities so other cities can learn from these successes.

# American Planning Association

<https://www.planning.org/>



## Overview

The American Planning Association (APA) is a nonprofit education and membership organization. Members include practicing planners, planning students, elected, and appointed officials, planning commissioners, and interested citizens.

## Mission

The APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners, are dedicated to advancing the art, science, and profession of good planning to create communities that offer better choices for where and how people work and live.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

APA's flagship program "Great Places in America" celebrates places of exemplary character, quality, and planning. Places are selected annually and represent the gold standard in terms of having a true sense of place, cultural and historical interest, and community involvement. APA Great Places program offers better choices for where and how people work and live. The 2014 Great Places in America that are UWFP locations include: **Washington, DC, Denver, CO, St. Louis, MO, Seattle, WA, and Philadelphia, PA.**

APA's Sustaining Places Initiative is a multi-year, multi-faceted program to define the role of planning in addressing human settlement issues relating to sustainability. Working through a task force and pilot communities across the country, this initiative has developed guidance for integrating sustainability into the process, content, and implementation of local government comprehensive plans.

APA develops and disseminates information on trends, tools, and best practices in urban planning through its Research and Advisory Service programs. Planning Advisory Service provides practical guidance on topics of concern to practitioners, along with innovative best practices to address emerging planning issues. The three National Centers of Planning conduct applied, policy-relevant research on green communities, hazards planning, and planning and community health.

APA's Community Assistance Program provides place-based assistance and advisory services to communities, regions, and neighborhoods. The program engages planning professionals and demonstrates the benefits of planning to communities around the country. There are two components of the Community Assistance Program: the Community Planning Assistance Teams and the Community Planning Workshops.

The 2014 AICP Community Planning Workshop focused on community revitalization of the Broad Street corridor, which connects the MARTA Five Points Station and Garnett Street Station in the historic heart of **downtown Atlanta.**

# American Rivers

<http://www.americanrivers.org/>



## Overview

American Rivers protects wild rivers, restores damaged rivers, and conserves clean water for people and nature. Since 1973, American Rivers has protected and restored more than 150,000 miles of rivers through advocacy efforts, on-the-ground projects, and an annual America's Most Endangered Rivers® campaign. Through river conservation work American Rivers works to ensure clean drinking water supplies, revitalize fish and wildlife, improve recreation, and leave a legacy of healthy rivers for future generations.

## Mission

In order to carry out its mission and achieve its vision, American Rivers has developed a new Strategic Plan for a more focused and effective conservation organization. Accordingly, the organization has identified three Strategic Goals to guide its work over the next five years:

**Strategic Goal #1:** American Rivers will improve the health of rivers across the nation by protecting and restoring flows, connectivity, water quality, and habitats in priority rivers and basins.

**Strategic Goal #2:** American Rivers will be recognized as the leading advocate for river conservation in national policy discussions and debates.

**Strategic Goal #3:** American Rivers will be a financially sound and sustainable organization with a growing base of unrestricted financial support and dedicated support for priority programs.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

American Rivers is working to reconnect communities with their urban rivers through blue trails and river cleanups, and advocates for innovative approaches to water management like green infrastructure, natural flood management, and water efficiency practices.

- National River Cleanup was launched in 1991, offering support to individuals, organizations, and anyone interested in conducting a cleanup on their local river. By registering a cleanup with American Rivers, organizers receive free trash bags, assistance with online and print media coverage, volunteer promotion online, and technical support. Since its start, more than 1,241,610 volunteers have participated in thousands of cleanups across the country covering more than 252,694 miles of waterways. These cleanups have removed more than 20.7 million pounds of litter and debris from America's rivers and streams.
- In urban areas, people are often disconnected from rivers. Blue Trails help connect people to their local rivers and increase access to recreational opportunities. Though many rivers have suffered from decades of neglect, pollution, and other ills, communities are taking steps to connect with their rivers through recreation and environmental education.
- American Rivers works on the local, state, and federal levels to advocate for green infrastructure, a cost-effective approach to stormwater management that works with nature by using techniques such as green roofs, rain gardens, and porous pavement to reduce polluted stormwater runoff and flooding while improving quality of life and valuable neighborhood greenspace. American Rivers also works to ensure that there is funding available to communities to implement these approaches and advocate for corresponding requirements and incentives in state and federal policy, such as reforming national regulations to control polluted stormwater runoff.
- American Rivers is also making urban communities safer by restoring rivers through the removal of unsafe and obsolete dams. For example, American Rivers is managing the Darby Creek Restoration Project in metropolitan Philadelphia. This \$1.3 million project involves the removal of three dams and a set of abandoned railroad piers, restoring the lower 9.7 miles of Darby Creek to free-flowing condition.

# American Society of Landscape Architects

<http://www.asla.org/>



## Overview

Founded in 1899, the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) is the national professional association for landscape architects. Landscape architects lead the stewardship, planning, and design of our built and natural environments. Stewardship of the land has always served a central role in the mission of the ASLA and is an integral element of all outreach.

ASLA works to increase the public's awareness of and appreciation for the profession of landscape architecture and its contributions to quality of life. ASLA is an active advocate for the environment and sustainable design, livable communities, surface transportation, historic preservation, and storm-water management issues, among others.

## Mission

The Society's mission is to advance landscape architecture through advocacy, communication, education, and fellowship.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Washington, DC:** ASLA's Green Roof Demonstration Project atop the Society's headquarters in Washington D.C. showcases the environmental benefits of green roofs as well as what landscape architects contribute to green infrastructure projects. Green roofs have significant community benefits such as controlling stormwater runoff, improving water quality, reducing the urban heat island effect, and improving air quality—all of which ASLA is committed to monitoring. ASLA also uses the green roof as a teaching tool, offering tours to policymakers, design professionals, students, and the general public to showcase how the green roof has benefited the community.

In October 2014, ASLA joined the *Green Infrastructure Collaborative*, a network of federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector entities with the goal of helping communities implement green infrastructure as a means of addressing water quality issues and community development goals. Upon joining the Collaborative, the Society pledged to establish a green infrastructure streetscape demonstration project in ASLA's Washington D.C. Chinatown neighborhood. The project includes the design, installation, and maintenance of an interconnected series of vegetated systems and innovative infrastructure technologies to manage stormwater runoff and beautify the public space. This project will serve as a model and educational tool for developers, designers, city officials, and the public. Located in an urban area that faces significant issues related to combined sewer outflows and a degraded watershed, the high level of visibility of the project is particularly important.

# Amigos de los Rios

<http://www.amigosdelosrios.org/>



## Overview

Amigos de los Rios (Amigos) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established in 2003. Amigos works to create vibrant communities by designing quality public environments in collaboration with local governments, businesses, and residents. Amigos also strives to bring renewed life to urban neighborhoods. Stewards of the East Los Angeles County Emerald Necklace Park Network, Amigos collaborates with communities to protect and restore open spaces by designing quality public environments (parks and trails) that revitalize city neighborhoods within economically challenged communities in Southern California.

## Mission

The mission of Amigos is to create a regional Emerald Necklace of sustainable open spaces along urban river corridors that connect the mountains to the sea — protecting the environment and strengthening community life for the benefit of current and future generations.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Los Angeles, California:** Over the past eleven years Amigos de los Rios has worked as a liaison between the community and public agencies to facilitate the collaborative effort known as the Emerald Necklace Expanded Vision Plan. The work by Amigos is based on the 1929 Olmsted Bartholomew Plan for the Los Angeles Basin – reinterpreted in contemporary terms. In 2005, Amigos de los Rios introduced the initial Emerald Necklace Vision Plan that outlined a detailed strategy for the development of a 17 mile loop of beautiful multi-benefit parks and greenways connecting 10 cities and nearly 500,000 residents along the Río Hondo and San Gabriel Rivers watershed areas located in East Los Angeles County. Last year, with funding from the California Natural Resources Agency and in partnership with the Conservation Fund, Amigos released the Emerald Necklace Expanded Green Infrastructure Plan for the La Basin. The goal of Amigos is to improve ecosystem services and public health throughout the Los Angeles Basin with connections between the Santa Monica Mountains, Rim of the Valley, and San Gabriel Mountains, and from the Mountains to the Pacific Ocean by linking trails, parks and open spaces greenway along the Río Hondo, San Gabriel, and the Los Angeles Urban River corridors Rivers. The eastern portion of Regional Park Network includes:

- 62 cities in the San Gabriel and Gateway Cities East County Los Angeles region
- More than 7,500 acres of land
- 75 miles of multi-benefit river trails
- 56 miles of wash and creek trails
- Approximately 450 existing parks
- Approximately 60 potential parks
- 30,000 trees (estimated)

Amigos park projects use green infrastructure methodologies, such as on-site water filtration, bioswales, and low-water-use irrigation, as well as drought-tolerant and native-plant landscaping, to conserve water and to protect biodiversity and our natural resources. Amigos provides knowledge, skills, and leadership in the following areas:

- Developing community partnerships and organizing community action programs
- Conservation of open and natural spaces within the metropolitan region
- Efficiently utilizing funding for green infrastructure projects, including sustainability planning
- Promoting community involvement in all aspects of project planning, design, and development
- Curriculum creation for K-12 and family-oriented multi-cultural environmental education programs
- Developing vocational green collar training certification programs
- Collective Impact Coalition Building between diverse government agencies and communities

# Arbor Day Foundation

<http://www.arborday.org/>



## Overview

Founded in 1972, the centennial of the first Arbor Day observance, the Arbor Day Foundation has grown to become the largest nonprofit membership organization dedicated to planting trees. The foundation now has over one million members, supporters, and valued partners.

The foundation supports a range of education and conservation programs to replant our nation's forests, create a foundation for urban forestry management in communities across the country, and connect children with nature.

## Mission

The Arbor Day Foundation works to inspire people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The Arbor Day Foundation has worked in communities around the country, many of which are in the UWFP network. Starting in 1976, the foundation has recognized communities through *Tree City USA*, a national program that provides the framework for community forestry management for cities and towns across America. Communities achieve *Tree City USA* status by meeting four core standards of sound urban forestry management: maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry and celebrating Arbor Day.

Participating communities have demonstrated a commitment to caring for and managing their public trees. Together, those 3,400 *Tree City USA* communities serve as home to more than 135 million Americans. Allied recognition programs for electric utility companies (*Tree Line USA*) and universities (*Tree Campus USA*) continue to expand the brand and influence of urban forestry programs delivered by the foundation.

**The Bronx, New York:** The Foundation's TD Green Streets program provides funds to support the city of New York and The Bronx River Alliance to improve wildlife habitat, and protect and restore the Bronx River Forest. By engaging volunteers from local schools and community groups, the project will help build the long-term stewardship of the Bronx River Forest, which is one of the last functioning floodplains in all of New York City. Although major improvements have been made this past decade, continued management is needed to sustain the vital functions the floodplain provides to the river. This project will help to plant more than 500 native trees in 3 plots totaling 13,340 square feet (.31 acres) over the span of a year. By engaging the community in planting and stewardship activities, and providing education about environmental issues on the river, funds from TD Green Streets will help hundreds of people connect to their natural surroundings and become advocates for the forest's future. The project is a valuable opportunity for residents of all ages to gain lifelong skills in ecological restoration and develop a foundation of stewardship for the river.

**New Jersey Communities:** The New Jersey Community Tree Recovery Campaign is a partnership between the Arbor Day Foundation and the New Jersey Division of State Forestry Services. This campaign provided trees to homeowners and communities who lost their urban canopy in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. The project provided tens of thousands of seedling trees to those in need and will pave the way for restoration of New Jersey's community forests for years to come. Planting efforts began in spring 2014, with 115,000 trees distributed at 97 separate events in 18 New Jersey counties affected by Hurricane Sandy.



**Pike National Forest, Colorado:** The Buffalo Creek Fire burned 12,000 acres on Pike National Forest in 1996 and the Hayman Fire burned approximately 137,000 acres in 2002, the largest fire in Colorado's history. Both fires had a devastating impact on the upper South Platte watershed, the primary water source for the City of Denver. In moderate and high intensity burn areas, 100% of the trees were lost along with future seed sources for natural regeneration. Foundation programs to reforest these damaged portions of a critical watershed will help deliver clean water to millions of Denver residents.

# Chesapeake Conservancy

<http://www.chesapeakeconservancy.org/>



## Overview

The Chesapeake Conservancy is dedicated to ensuring conservation, stewardship, and access of the Chesapeake Bay, its lands, and rivers. The Conservancy was created out of a merger between the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail and Friends of Chesapeake Gateways.

In the five years since the Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail was first founded, the Conservancy has recognized a need for a strong organization that can advocate, marshal new resources, and forge new partnerships to increase public access to the Chesapeake and its great rivers, ensure conservation of the region's most treasured landscapes and waterways, and promote stewardship and enjoyment of the region's natural, cultural, and historic treasures.

## Mission

The Chesapeake Conservancy's mission is to strengthen the connection between people and the watershed, conserve the landscapes and special places that sustain the Chesapeake's unique natural and cultural resources, and encourage the exploration and celebration of the Chesapeake as a national treasure.

The Conservancy advances this mission through partnerships and citizen engagement; educational programs; land conservation, public access and recreational opportunities; advocacy; and signature initiatives to connect people with the natural and cultural heritage of the Chesapeake Bay.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Washington, DC and Hampton Roads, Virginia:** The Chesapeake Conservancy and the National Park Service (NPS) have developed a John Smith Trail Conservation Strategy that defines a process for prioritizing conservation areas along the Capt. John Smith Trail, a historic trail that covers more than 3,000 miles of the Chesapeake Bay and tributaries that are important to the visitor experience. Working alongside the NPS, the Conservancy is implementing this strategy along each segment of the trail, which is being implemented and managed on a segment by segment basis due to its considerable length. For each segment, the NPS, the Conservancy, and a team of local partners develop a segment plan that identifies key areas for conservation using the Trail Conservation Strategy and prioritizes implementation activities, including new access sites and interpretive signage. The Lower James River Segment Plan has been completed and the Potomac River Segment Plan is in progress.

**Baltimore, Maryland:** The Chesapeake Conservancy began its work in Baltimore by advocating for the designation of the nation's first Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership, Masonville Cove. Located on the southern side of Baltimore Harbor, Masonville Cove, a former Dredged Material Containment Facility, now provides an environmental education center and public access to the water for several underserved communities. Masonville Cove now serves as a cornerstone for a new initiative, Greater Baltimore Wilderness.

Chesapeake Conservancy staff members are actively engaged in and serve on the steering committee of *Greater Baltimore Wilderness*, a coalition of partners spearheaded by the USFWS Chesapeake Bay Office that aims to create a resilient network of parks and open spaces in the greater Baltimore area. The Coalition is building upon previous conservation efforts and is concentrating its work on projects that incorporate four principal focus efforts: resilience, biodiversity, equity, and discovery.

To raise awareness and help launch the initiative, the Conservancy, in partnership with National Geographic, produced a *Baltimore Wilderness* map to highlight the resources that exist and the need to create a more resilient network. Concurrently, the Conservancy has launched the *Mamie Parker Journey: Inspiring Youth to Embrace the Chesapeake* speaker series. Dr. Mamie Parker, former Assistant Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and current board member of the Chesapeake Conservancy, will speak to high school students across Baltimore, inspiring them with her personal story to explore and pursue careers in conservation and the environment.

# City Parks Alliance

<http://www.cityparksalliance.org>



## Overview

Established in 2000 by a nationwide group of urban parks administrators and advocates, the City Parks Alliance is the only independent, nationwide membership organization solely dedicated to urban parks. It unites and serves a growing network of hundreds of civic and community leaders, government agencies, parks and recreation authorities, funders, and others.

The City Parks Alliance leads and serves the community of diverse organizations that encompass the parks world, from neighborhood groups to government agencies, championing high quality urban parks throughout the nation and recognizing city parks as an integral part of forming stronger, more vibrant cities that nurture their residents from every walk of life.

## Mission

The mission of the City Parks Alliance is to engage, educate, and nurture a broad-based constituency to support the creation, revitalization, and sustainability of parks and green spaces that contribute to dynamic cities. The organization's vision is that everyone in urban America will have access to parks and green spaces that are clean, safe, and vibrant.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

City Parks Alliance provides numerous opportunities to highlight and support the Urban Waters Partnership:

**Biennial International Urban Park Conferences:** The next City Parks Alliance biennial international urban parks conference, *Greater & Greener 2015: Innovative Parks, Vibrant Cities*, will be held in San Francisco, April 11-14, 2015. *Greater & Greener 2015* will bring together 1,000 urban leaders from around the world to debate, celebrate, organize, connect, and share with others who are working to improve the economy and environment of cities across the nation and around the world.

City Parks Alliance's 2015 conference will be the premier forum for showcasing innovative and effective park development, maintenance, programming, and policy and their intersection with city planning, economic development, environmental sustainability, community engagement, transportation, and neighborhood equity.

**Webinars:** City Parks Alliance provides webinars to support its member organizations and others working in the urban realm. This unique program features the nation's top urban park leaders and provides on-line expertise about pressing issues facing managers and stewards of our nation's urban parks. Webinars are presented throughout the year, focusing on building effective park partnerships between the public and private sectors. Recent webinar topics have included Stormwater Management: Partnerships and Best Practices; Stormwater Management and Design; and The Changing Role of Parks in Urban Water Management, among others.

**Public/Private Partnerships:** City Parks Alliance is taking a lead role in providing expertise on how to use public-private partnership models as a way of managing, funding, and programming parks. Through forums, webinars, and training sessions, City Parks Alliance brings together experts to provide guidance on the best way to create a partnership framework. At a time when funding for parks and greenspace continues to be challenged by competition from other cash-strapped agencies, this framework will help support collaborative governance to leverage resources around green infrastructure, parkland acquisition, and park development and sustainability.

# The Conservation Fund

<http://www.conservationfund.org/>



## Overview

The Conservation Fund pursues conservation of important lands and waters and supports sustainable economic development. Since 1985, the Fund has protected more than 7 million acres of land and aquatic areas across the nation, demonstrating that effective land and water conservation makes good economic sense. It works hand-in-hand with communities, government agencies, businesses, landowners, and conservation nonprofits and other partners to achieve their conservation priorities.

The Fund provides a range of services to support its partners' conservation efforts, including land acquisition, conservation finance, community and economic development, environmental mitigation services, green infrastructure planning, and conservation leadership training.

## Mission

The Conservation Fund, working with public, private and nonprofit partners, protects America's legacy of land and water resources through land acquisition, leadership training and sustainable community, and economic development, emphasizing the integration of economic and environmental goals.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The Fund has effectively worked in communities around the country, including many communities where the UWFP has also been active. The Fund brings a variety of tools and programs to its work in urban areas to support communities and their conservation efforts. The Fund's urban activities include strategic conservation planning, land acquisition, assistance to underserved communities in organizing and accessing needed resources, financing for green entrepreneurs and local land trusts, and training for community, government, and business leaders.

**Atlanta, Georgia:** The Fund has worked for more than a decade on expanding parks and greenspaces in the City of Atlanta, adding more than 200 acres to the city's greenspaces in almost 40 projects since 2003. This work began with a strategic GIS assessment of the need for additional greenspaces commissioned by the Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation. Over the past 4 years, the Fund has worked on land acquisition for new park space in the underserved neighborhoods of English Avenue and Vine City in the upper part of the Proctor Creek Watershed. These acquisitions include the first parks for each of these neighborhoods, which face significant storm water flooding and some of the highest crime, poverty, and vacancy rates in Atlanta. They also lie in the headwaters of Proctor Creek and its tributaries, waterways besieged by high bacteria levels, illegal dumping, pollution, and erosion resulting from irresponsible planning and development. In partnership with the city, The Arthur M. Blank Foundation, The Waterfall Foundation, Park Pride, and community organizations, the Fund is working to implement Park Pride's green infrastructure vision for adding strategic greenspaces that can address storm water flooding and improve quality of life for neighborhood residents. Through its Resourceful Communities program, the Fund has worked closely with neighborhood residents to build initiatives for new park space and to ensure projects include economic, social, and environmental benefits – including employing neighborhood residents in building the first park for the English Avenue neighborhood. Together, the Fund, its partners, and residents are helping to bring economic development, improved water quality, flood mitigation, and improved public health and quality of life through new, strategically designed greenspaces.

**Los Angeles, California:** The Fund has been a key partner with Los Angeles-based Amigos de los Rios, a nonprofit organization working to protect and restore open spaces and revitalize communities in the Los Angeles region. Amigos has convened the *[Emerald Necklace Coalition](#)*, 62 member agencies with a connection to East Los Angeles, that pledged to work collaboratively to preserve and restore the Los Angeles and San Gabriel watersheds and their rivers and tributaries for recreational open space, native habitat restoration,

conservation, and education and to re-connect residents with green space in the many working-class neighborhoods these watersheds transect. The Fund recently worked with Amigos and its partners to refresh its vision of linked natural and green spaces extending from the San Gabriel Mountains to the Pacific Ocean along an interconnected greenway around the Río Hondo, San Gabriel, and the lower Los Angeles Rivers. The new *Emerald Necklace Forest to Ocean Expanded Vision* plan, released just a few months ago, presents a contemporary vision for re-creating Los Angeles County as a better place to live, work, and play for decades to come. In addition to the green infrastructure planning and leadership training assistance, the Fund has provided advance funding for implementing some of the vision through its Land Conservation Loan Program.

**Baltimore, Maryland:** Working with the leaders of the Greater Baltimore Wilderness Coalition, including the Patapsco Urban Waters Partnership, the Fund has taken a leading role in defining a major regional coastal green infrastructure resiliency project that will help position the partnership's efforts on the lower Patapsco and Inner Harbor into a broader watershed and landscape context. The Fund is leading a team of partners including the American Planning Association, U.S. Geological Survey, Center for Chesapeake Communities, and Chesapeake Conservancy in a project that will engage regional local governments in coordinated planning around natural and nature-based green infrastructure calculated to protect communities, built infrastructure, and natural resources from adverse coastal storm impacts and effects of climate change such as sea level rise.

**Washington, DC:** The Fund has been active in efforts to increase public awareness and engagement with the Anacostia River restoration in the District of Columbia. Along with the Chesapeake Conservancy, the Fund supported the creation of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historical Trail, the nation's first all-water National Historical Trail. The John Smith Trail provides an unparalleled opportunity for the public to learn and appreciate Native American history, Smith's voyages more than 400 years ago, and the ecology, then and now, of the Chesapeake Bay watershed, including major tributaries such as the Potomac and Anacostia. Working with the Anacostia Watershed Society, the Fund developed a new Anacostia River Water Trail Guide, highlighting historical, cultural, natural, and recreational points of interest on or adjacent to the river, as well as paddling, hiking, biking, and other activities. The guide also spotlighted opportunities for new points of access and community connections to the river corridor.

**New Orleans, Louisiana:** For more than 15 years, the Fund has worked to protect and restore coastal wetland and associated upland habitats, like those found around Lake Pontchartrain. Recently, the Fund supported the construction of an elevated boardwalk at the northwest corner of Joyce Wildlife Management Area providing visitors easy access to view wildlife and vegetation within the ecosystem. The Fund also acquired 675 acres of diverse wetland habitat near the town of Maurepas, which will enhance an ongoing, multi-partner effort to expand and preserve key ecosystems within the West Pontchartrain-Maurepas Swamp Important Bird Area (IBA), a critical link in the migratory path for millions of birds annually travelling between North American nesting grounds and their wintering areas in Central and South America.

# Earth Force

<http://earthforce.org/>



## Overview

Earth Force is a nongovernment organization that works to engage young people to become active citizens who improve the environment and their communities now and in the future. The organization's vision consists of a nation where young people from all walks of life are actively making positive change to the environment at their schools, in their neighborhoods, and in partnership with their communities.

To support this vision the organization operates Centers of Excellence, including a six-step model (i.e., the "Earth Force Process"), to support young people in finding their voice while assuming leadership roles in creating sustainable solutions and solving local environmental problems.

The organization approaches its work through a "Collective Impact" lens and collaborates in an intentional, mutually beneficial way with local organizations in the communities served. Through building uncommon collaboratives, and driven by evidence-based and inclusive practices, Earth Force improves the way students of all ages learn and transforms the way communities engage our next generation of scientists, policymakers, and change agents.

## Mission

To engage young people as active citizens who improve the environment and their communities now and in the future.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The organization's General Motors (GM) Global Rivers Environmental Education Network program (GM GREEN) uses Earth Force's Youth Engagement Partnership structure to provide opportunities for young people to learn more about the watersheds they live in and to use their findings to create lasting solutions for pressing water quality issues. Through GM GREEN, Earth Force, local partners, and mentors at General Motors make progress on a shared commitment to civic engagement, education, and the environment. GM GREEN provides middle and high school students with exciting, hands-on science programs around watershed assessment and improvement through the Protecting Our Watershed curriculum. Educators are connected to local partners, including GM environmental engineers, who assist with water quality monitoring, offer classroom support, help make community connections, and coordinate events.

In recent years, GM GREEN has led to valuable community and youth education and engagement in cities across the country, including **Denver, Colorado, Kansas City, Kansas, and Baltimore, Maryland** where the UWFP is also currently working to restore urban waters and rejuvenate the surrounding communities. In 2013, GM GREEN included all U.S. cities with GM manufacturing facilities and added six GM communities in Canada.

# Groundwork USA

<http://groundworkusa.org/>



## Overview

Groundwork USA is a national organization with local roots, engaging local businesses, residents and government officials to revitalize neighborhoods and transform community liabilities into community assets.

Groundwork USA's key objectives are to:

- Increase the capacity of diverse, multi-ethnic communities to improve and care for their local environment;
- Clean up and care for neglected areas to signal community pride, rejuvenation, and social equity; and
- Engage business, government, non-profits, and communities to work together for sustainable environmental care, enhancement, and environmental justice.

## Mission

The mission of the Groundwork USA network is to bring about the sustained regeneration, improvement, and management of the physical environment by developing community-based partnerships which empower people, businesses, and organizations to promote environmental, economic, and social well-being.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

EPA has partnered up with Groundwork USA and River Network to establish the Urban Waters Learning Network to create and promote networking and to provide technical assistance and learning opportunities to more than 120 EPA Urban Waters grantees and other urban waters practitioners all over the country. The goal of the **Urban Waters Learning Network** is to improve the “impaired urban water resources – rivers, lakes, wetlands and more – and the socioeconomically challenged communities around them by providing local organizations, tribal and local governments with the skills and techniques to effectively restore these resources over time.”

In addition, of the local 20 Groundwork Trusts across the country, many have major urban waterways programs including:

**Groundwork Denver, Colorado:** This trust has led holistic watershed planning efforts for the urbanized section of Bear Creek, which has included community outreach, stakeholder engagement, water quality data analysis, and modeling to determine sources of pollution.

**Groundwork New Orleans, Louisiana:** Following Hurricane Katrina, the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans was left with vacant lots, and once flourishing wetlands became an urban swamp decimated by salt water intrusion. The trust initiated a movement to “take back the streets” through improved stormwater management as a way to answer community needs. Bayou Bienvenue was also restored, so that it now contains a shade structure, rain garden, native plants, fruit trees, benches, and educational signage.

**Groundwork Anacostia, DC:** A Bandalong Litter Trap was installed to collect floating litter in the Watts Branch tributary of the Anacostia River, which is well-known for its critical levels of pollution and litter. Managed by a core of volunteers, the litter trap collects more than 5,500 tons of trash per year.

**Groundwork Milwaukee, Wisconsin:** Through various partnerships, this trust initiated best management practices for storm water (rain gardens, rain barrels, plantings) on 53 properties within the Kinnickinnic watershed using their youth Green Team.

**Groundwork Lawrence, Massachusetts:** This trust has been instrumental in the on-the-ground visualization of a 3.5 mile greenway along the Spicket River—a 12-year project.

**Groundwork Hudson Valley, New York:** For more than a decade this trust led the effort to daylight the Saw Mill River in downtown Yonkers. On November 15, 2011, waters began to flow aboveground for the first time in 90 years – a major achievement for the trust and the city.

Other Groundwork trusts with urban waters projects include: Groundwork Dallas, Groundwork San Diego Chollas Creek, and Groundwork Cincinnati Mill Creek.

# The Intertwine Alliance

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



## Overview

The Intertwine Alliance is a coalition of public, private and nonprofit organizations working together to integrate nature more deeply into the Portland - Vancouver Metropolitan Region. The Alliance is broad and diverse. It includes nonprofits, from small to large, that have missions ranging from conservation to community health. It includes parks agencies, from municipal parks departments to the National Park Service. Private companies are also partners in The Intertwine Alliance, including prominent firms in the sportswear, health, engineering, architecture, and utility sectors.

The Alliance applies the Collective Impact Framework to address a wide range of urban issues and challenges. The Intertwine Alliance works to attract new investment in parks, trails, and natural areas, better leverage existing investment, and more deeply engage residents and policymakers.

## Mission

The mission of The Intertwine Alliance is to integrate nature more deeply into the Portland metropolitan region. It does this by attracting new investment, engaging the public, and enabling Alliance members to join forces for greater collective impact.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The Intertwine Alliance addresses a wide range of issues including community health, conservation, ecosystem services, urban forestry, conservation education, public engagement, nature play, parks, trails, and equity / inclusion.

The Intertwine Alliance developed a regional conservation strategy and biodiversity guide for the Portland – Vancouver metropolitan region. The strategy identifies priority habitats, which has allowed conservation practitioners to develop large landscape restoration strategies, often focused on specific watersheds. These works were developed in typical Intertwine Alliance fashion: 161 individual contributors from 75 organizations joined forces to create them.

The Intertwine Alliance has brought together the environmental, health, and social justice sectors to explore how to leverage investments in nature to achieve community health outcomes. The Intertwine Alliance is harnessing the power of its coalition as a force for social and environmental justice. This is being done through a variety of programs that draw on the wisdom of existing community leaders who support peer learning and offer trainings to The Intertwine Alliance community.

The Intertwine Alliance has developed a public engagement campaign called “Our Common Ground,” which is being implemented through the collective contributions of Alliance partners. The goal of the campaign is to engage residents with nature in the metropolitan region.

The Alliance has integrated information from 28 area parks agencies to create a comprehensive online, interactive park and trail map to encourage residents to explore nature near where they live. As a next step, The Intertwine Alliance has raised more than \$200,000 to develop a mobile application for the greater Portland community that supports learning about native species in the region. Part travel guide, part wildlife encyclopedia, the app will be the first of its kind in the U.S. and will encourage individuals in the Portland region to enjoy and connect with nature. The app is being built on open source technologies so that it can be adopted by other metropolitan regions.

# Izaak Walton League of America

<http://www.iwla.org/>



## Overview

Founded in 1922, the Izaak Walton League is one of the nation's oldest and most respected conservation organizations. With a powerful grassroots network of 245 local chapters nationwide, the League takes a common-sense approach to protecting our country's natural heritage and improving outdoor recreation opportunities for all Americans.

The League believes that America needs smart solutions that are good for the environment and the economy at the same time. Relying on a unique blend of community-based conservation and common-sense advocacy, the League has made significant progress to protect and restore our nation's waters, promote clean energy, and advance sustainable agriculture.

## Mission

To conserve, restore, and promote the sustainable use and enjoyment of our natural resources, including soil, air, woods, waters, and wildlife.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Community-Based Conservation:** Izaak Walton League chapters are rooted in communities across America, meeting local conservation challenges and working to introduce youth and families to conservation and outdoor recreation. League members build nature trails, restore stream banks, plant trees and rain gardens, and prevent the spread of invasive species on land and in the water. A December 2013 survey found that 35 percent of League chapters are restoring local fish and wildlife habitat. League members help establish urban gardens for communities and school children. Members also educate homeowners about ways to reduce runoff, including rain barrels.

**Clean Water:** The League has been at the forefront of every major clean water battle in the United States, from a decades-long push for federal water pollution control in the 1940s to efforts today to restore Clean Water Act protections for critical streams and wetlands. Volunteers around the country use the League's landmark **Save Our Streams (SOS)** program to monitor local waterways, plan restoration projects, and report water quality problems. The Izaak Walton League provides several resources to help community groups initiate an SOS project in their area, including stream monitoring procedures, data collection forms, and step-by-step guides for stream restoration, advocacy, and education.

Through the Save Our Streams program, League members in Syracuse documented a sharp decline in water quality in Beartrap Creek, a tributary of Onondaga Lake. State scientists confirmed the problem: The water was contaminated with large quantities of ethylene glycol, an airplane de-icer. The chemical was traced to Syracuse's Hancock International Airport. Thanks to the volunteers' monitoring data and advocacy efforts, the airport agreed to build a de-icer reclamation and treatment facility. This is just one of the many volunteer-led victories that brought Lake Onondaga back from the dead.

More than 500 volunteers working through the **Virginia Save Our Streams (VA SOS)** program monitored more than 200 stream sites across the state in 2013. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality relies on this information to identify and address water quality problems across the state. The information is also used by volunteers to identify pollution problems and evaluate the success of stream restoration projects.

**Clean Energy:** The League has worked in the upper Midwest and across the country to advance energy efficiency and promote renewable energy resources to power homes, businesses, and vehicles. Legislation championed by the League in Minnesota – including a nation-leading renewable energy standard for utilities and a statewide energy policy that seeks to limit greenhouse gas

emissions – serves as a model for other states. The League won a decade-long battle for strong federal regulation of the largest source of mercury emissions in the United States: coal-fired power plants.

The League recently succeeded in securing a true calculation of the value of solar energy. The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission approved a statewide “Value of Solar” methodology to more accurately calculate the net value of solar power – particularly power generated by homeowners and communities – to the energy grid. This is an objective way to ensure customers are fairly compensated for the energy their solar systems generate. It also ensures that utilities and other customers accurately pay for the benefits this solar energy provides.

**Restored Rivers and Lakes:** League members are leading conservation efforts in the **Great Lakes** region, and League staff members are organizing a similar member-engagement effort around **Chesapeake Bay** restoration. The League is pioneering outreach to Maryland homeowners in the Muddy Branch watershed (which eventually drains into the Chesapeake Bay) to improve installation rates for rain barrels, rain gardens, and other conservation landscapes that can improve local water quality.

The League is working with federal and state agencies and private stakeholders to assess the environmental challenges facing the **Missouri River** and find solutions that work for the region’s ecology and economy. These solutions include restoring areas of the river and increasing opportunities for recreation. Promoting recreational use of the Missouri River is an excellent way to increase river stewardship. The League worked with colleagues and stakeholders to obtain a National Water Trail

Network listing for stretches of the river. These trails attract paddlers from across the country providing benefits to local economies. The League also helps to coordinate Missouri River clean ups in communities in the region – including Yankton, SD; Sioux City, IA; Omaha, NE; Council Bluffs, IA; and Pierre, SD – that bring hundreds of volunteers to the river. Through their efforts, the river is healthier for fish and wildlife and more attractive to recreational users. The League also plays a major role in organizing the annual Missouri River Watershed Education Festival, which draws hundreds of high school students to Yankton, SD, each year to learn about the many issues facing the river and the nation’s natural resources.

# National Association of Clean Water Agencies

<http://www.nacwa.org/>



## Overview

The National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA) is a nationally-recognized leader in environmental policy and a sought-after technical resource on water quality and ecosystem protection issues as it relates to the Clean Water Act. NACWA was established in 1970 by a group of municipal wastewater agencies who came together to secure federal funding for municipal wastewater treatment and discuss emerging national interest in improving the quality of the nation's waters.

## Mission

NACWA is a dynamic national organization, involved in all facets of water quality protection. Viewed as a key stakeholder in both the legislative and regulatory arenas, NACWA aims to build credible, collaborative relationships with members of Congress, presidential administrations, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

For 40 years, NACWA has been the clean water community's voice in Congress, at the EPA, in the courts, and in the media. NACWA's credible, collaborative relationships with these institutions and in-depth understanding of current clean water challenges make the association uniquely qualified to respond to today's increasingly complex challenges.

**Water Quality:** NACWA works with members of the clean water community on 21st century challenges facing clean water agencies every day. Recently, NACWA efforts have focused issue by issue and more broadly on exploring possible fixes to the way the nation approaches its water quality needs. Its focus areas have included: nutrients, emerging contaminants, water quality standards, mercury, and total maximum daily loads.

**Stormwater:** Urban stormwater runoff is a growing environmental concern in communities throughout the nation and many NACWA members are responsible for stormwater management activities. On behalf of municipal separate stormwater sewer systems (MS4) communities NACWA believes reduction in adverse water quality impacts from stormwater is best achieved through watershed approaches and complementing traditional infrastructure with innovative management techniques such as green infrastructure. This blend of sustainable infrastructure improves water quality while providing myriad co-benefits to the community.

**The Water Resources Utility of the Future (UOTF):** UOTF is defined by today's utility leaders pioneering innovative technologies and cutting-edge practices with a focus on resource recovery. NACWA is committed to making sure the array of UOTF issues – whether related to energy production, water reuse, green infrastructure or watershed-based approaches - are priorities with Congress, the Administration and other key stakeholders going forward.

**Climate Change:** NACWA believes that climate change is primarily a water issue, and the association's advocacy focuses on the interrelationships between water resources and climate change, including the needs of clean water agencies in adapting to climate change impacts and further research about these impacts. NACWA is also committed to ensuring that greenhouse gas emissions from wastewater treatment are accurately estimated and that any mitigation efforts that target wastewater are reasonable.

NACWA promotes a watershed based approach to water quality to holistically consider all causes of water quality impairment and to restore the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters. NACWA's Strategic Watershed Task Force issued its recommendations for a "Viable and Vital 21st Century Clean Water Policy" on the 35th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, and the task force is now working on one of the report's primary recommendations, the "21st Century Watershed Action."

# National Recreation and Park Association

<http://www.nrpa.org>



## Overview

National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) is the leading nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of public parks, recreation, and conservation. Their work draws national focus to successes generated at the local level. NRPA's membership includes more than 46,000 individuals, and represents public spaces in urban communities, rural settings, and everything in between. This broad membership enables them to leverage their role in conservation, health and wellness, and social equity to improve their communities.

NRPA partners with organizations, including those in the federal government, nonprofits, and commercial enterprises. Funded through dues, grants, registrations, and charitable contributions, NRPA produces research, education, and policy initiatives for their members that ultimately enrich the communities they serve. NRPA is a strong supporter of state side Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and introduced legislation to fund urban parks.

## Mission

NRPA works to advance parks, recreation, and environmental conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The NRPA has supported the building and revitalization of parks through the Parks Build Community initiative in several urban areas around the country. Parks Build Community is a national initiative demonstrating the transformative impact of parks on the health and vitality of communities across America. To date, Parks Build Community projects have been completed in Washington, DC, Atlanta, GA, Los Angeles, CA, Houston, TX, and Charlotte, NC.

**Washington, DC:** For its kick-off project, NRPA collaborated with Washington Parks & People, George Mason University (GMU), and the Washington, D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation to help revitalize Marvin Gaye Park in Northeast D.C., and improve the health and wellness of the local youth population.

**Atlanta, Georgia:** In 2011, NRPA and partners revitalized Selena Butler Park in Atlanta. The park is rich in African-American history, being located just blocks from the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site and named for Selena Sloan Butler, one of the original founders of the National Parent-Teacher Association.

**Los Angeles, California:** The site for the park at El Sereno was a one acre parcel of unused land owned by Caltrans, the state transportation agency. Sitting vacant for decades, the parcel originally caught the eye of the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks in their search to bring more local parks to underserved urban communities. The extraordinary efforts of the NRPA and partners produced a jewel of a park for young children.

The NRPA also collects data through its EcoBenefits calculator to measure the ecological and economic benefits of parks. The categories include various measures of water quality benefits, considering water runoff, velocity, erosion, and pollution effects of properly managed water detention and flood control systems. The NRPA also advocates for funding for urban park programs and develops white papers and policy positions to authorize legislation that supports urban parks.

# National Wildlife Federation

<http://www.nwf.org/>



## Overview

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is working to protect the ecosystems that are most critical to native wildlife. NWF works to improve federal and state policies that will improve wildlife conservation on hundreds of millions of acres of public, tribal, and private lands, including thousands of miles of streams, rivers, lakes and coastlines across America.

## Mission

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) is America's largest conservation organization, inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. NWF programs educate and inspire people to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat. NWF focuses its conservation and education work in three major areas that will have the biggest impact on the future of America's wildlife:

- Protecting and restoring wildlife habitat, including where people live, work, learn, play, and worship
- Connecting children to nature for a nation of happier, healthier kids. These connections in early life will teach children to appreciate and respect the natural world so they can be good conservation stewards in the future
- Providing guidance and seeking solutions to make the nation's wildlife, people, and communities more resilient to the major threats posed by climate change

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Gardening for Wildlife Program:** NWF's Gardening for Wildlife Program reaches thousands of Americans encouraging them to restore wildlife habitat where they live, work, play, learn (Schoolyards program), and worship (Sacred Grounds program). In Baltimore, working with the National Aquarium, there is a new certified wildlife habitat program aimed at the dual actions of water quality and quantity, and wildlife habitat. The program operates on the belief that actions taken in your own yard to attract wildlife and protect aquatic habitats can provide a wide range of benefits that reach far beyond local waterways.

**Climate Smart Communities:** NWF works where people live – in cities and towns – to promote wildlife-friendly and climate-smart approaches to urban sustainability. Climate change is intensifying existing stresses on wildlife and their habitats and amplifying natural hazards that threaten people and property where we work. Having a deep understanding of the hazards associated with climate change, the Climate-Smart Communities program helps cities and towns use nature-based approaches to prepare for the impacts of climate change in ways that support people, wildlife, and habitat. NWF is working with a set of communities to better understand their adaptation needs, challenges, and to generate early examples of successful nature-based adaptation approaches. This program seeks solutions and provides guidance to communities to help them prepare for the impacts of climate change on not only their communities, but also wildlife and habitat.

**Great Lakes (Western Lake Erie Basin, near Toledo, Ohio):** Through its Midwest Urban Initiative, NWF is working in the Great Lakes region's largest urban centers and communities of color to help strengthen the work being done on energy and sustainability, green job development, air and water quality, brown field and hazardous waste clean-up, and environmental justice issues.

**Mississippi River Delta (Lake Pontchartrain Area/ New Orleans):** NWF is partnering with Environmental Defense Fund and National Audubon Society for the *RESTORE the Mississippi River Delta campaign* to ensure that the Mississippi River Delta is safe and sustainable for people and wildlife. To do this, NWF and its partners are working to: 1.) Expedite the design and implementation of large-scale initiatives that restore the Mississippi River's natural capacity to build land, 2.) Ensure the safety of communities and businesses in the river delta by advocating for hurricane protection that includes coastal restoration and non-structural measures, 3.) Create sustained national and state funding and political will to move restoration from plan to action.



**The Chesapeake Bay:** NWF is part of the *Choose Clean Water Coalition* to serve as a strong, united, effective advocate for restoring the thousands of streams and rivers flowing to the Chesapeake Bay. The Coalition coordinates policy, message, action, and accountability for clean water at the federal, state, and local levels. The Coalition supports the implementation of state clean water blueprints, EPA's Chesapeake Bay pollution limits, and best practices for information sharing within and between states.

# The Nature Conservancy

<http://www.nature.org/>



## Overview

The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Its vision is to leave a sustainable world for future generations. The Nature Conservancy maintains programmatic areas that focus on freshwater, lands, and marine conservation, resilient cities, and climate change.

## Mission

The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Cities Initiative is helping targeted cities around the world assess and invest in natural infrastructure solutions to key urban challenges, including water supply, flood and storm protection, and air and water pollution. Contributing to this effort, the Conservancy has developed a Coastal Resilience Tool to enable communities to explore different flooding scenarios, analyze impacts on communities, and develop solutions to address these challenges.

In the United States, the Conservancy's Urban Strategies Initiative is focusing on 13 cities using a concept of whole-systems conservation and assisting cities in evaluating and implementing solutions that use nature to help reduce air pollutants, sustain clean water supplies, and protect communities from storms and hurricanes.

The Nature Conservancy has developed the science to enable governments, companies, and communities to use and share space, protect natural areas, improve resource management, and invest more wisely for a sustainable future. The Nature Conservancy's Development by Design (DbD) provides a holistic view of how future development could affect our natural systems and offers solutions for ensuring their health over the long-term for the people and precious wildlife that depend upon them.

The Nature Conservancy has formed the Great Rivers partnership to bring together diverse stakeholders and best science to work toward sustainable management and development of the world's most critical river systems. Through the Water Funds efforts, the Nature Conservancy works with communities in the U.S. and around the globe to protect the watersheds that supply their drinking water.

The Nature Conservancy has been involved in many initiatives across the country, including cities where the UWFP has been involved.

**Delaware River Basin:** The Nature Conservancy has helped to identify local restoration landscape opportunities that will benefit communities and the natural environment to support the Delaware River Basin Conservation Initiative.

The organization has also supported efforts to restore the Chesapeake Bay, Puget Sound, Great Lakes, Penobscot River, and other conservation actions in all 50 states.

# Restore America's Estuaries

<http://www.estuaries.org/>



## Overview

Restore America's Estuaries is a national nonprofit organization established in 1995 as an alliance of eleven community-based conservation organizations working to protect and restore the vital habitats of our nation's estuaries. Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to working closely with community, private, and governmental organizations to preserve the extraordinary heritage of our nation's estuaries.

## Mission

Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for our nation.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**New Orleans, Louisiana:** Restore America's Estuaries and NOAA are providing support for the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's Oyster Shell Recycling Program. The program is working collaboratively with restaurants throughout New Orleans to recycle used oyster shells to restore oyster reefs and shoreline habitat across coastal Louisiana. The project allows local restaurants and their patrons to play a part in helping preserve our coast. This project is keeping a valuable natural resource out of landfills and provides multiple benefits, which include protection and restoration of adjacent marshes, support of valuable fisheries, improvement of local water quality, recreational opportunities for the public, and a buffer for our coastal communities from the impacts of storms and sea level rise.

**Jamaica Bay, New York:** Restore America's Estuaries and NOAA are providing support for American Littoral Society's "Jamaica Bay CleanSweep" program which is removing hundreds of derelict boats, abandoned docks and other large marine debris. In addition to improving water quality and protecting the salt marsh, this initiative preserves habitat for wildlife and improves the recreational environment for anglers, boaters, and community members. In 2013, the American Littoral Society, with the help of local volunteers, located, mapped and documented more than 590 items of large marine debris. While Jamaica Bay is surrounded by commercial, industrial, and residential developments in Brooklyn and Queens, the Bay's waters, upland salt marshes, and islands provide valuable habitat, migratory and breeding grounds for 330 bird species and 107 species of finfish, along with recreational opportunities for residents.

**Puget Sound, Washington:** Restore America's Estuaries is working to advance science and understanding on carbon sequestration, and the loss of wetlands occurring across the country. This year, Restore America's Estuaries released the first landscape scale assessment of the climate mitigation benefits of restoring tidal wetland habitat. The study evaluated the Snohomish Estuary in Puget Sound because it is a representative system of the wider Pacific Northwest Region in terms of geomorphology, land use, and management issues. The Study, "Coastal Blue Carbon Opportunity Assessment for Snohomish Estuary: The Climate Benefits of Estuary Restoration" finds that currently planned and in-construction restoration projects in the Snohomish estuary will result in at least 2.55 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> sequestered from the atmosphere over the next 100-years. This is equivalent to the 1-year emissions for 500,000 average passenger cars. If plans expanded to fully restore the Snohomish estuary, the sequestration potential jumps to 8.9 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, equal to the 1-year emissions of about 1.7 million passenger cars.

**Tampa Bay, Florida:** Restore America's Estuaries "Targeting Blue Carbon" project in partnership with Tampa Bay Watch, Environmental Science Associates (ESA), The Tampa Bay Environmental Restoration Fund, and additional support from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will determine the past and potential future climate mitigation benefits of blue carbon ecosystem restoration and conservation in the Tampa Bay estuary. The assessment is an important part of a strategic effort by Restore America's Estuaries to increase understanding of the climate mitigation and adaptation benefits of estuary habitat restoration and conservation. It will utilize a transferrable approach and use the model recently developed for the Snohomish estuary in Washington.

#### **Key Initiatives**

**Restoration Fund:** The Tampa Bay Environmental Restoration Fund is a grants program with the goal of funding projects which restore and protect Tampa Bay and its watershed. It is managed through a partnership between the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) and Restore America's Estuaries (RAE). The Restoration Fund works to encourage local and national contributions from the public and private sectors and achieve measurable conservation outcomes. The Restoration Fund also works to implement the habitat, species, and nutrient reduction priorities that have been developed by the Tampa Bay Estuary Program and its partners, and outlined in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.

**National Estuaries Week:** For 2014 Restore America's Estuaries member and partners along with NOAA's National Estuarine Research Reserve System, and EPA's National Estuary Program organized special events such as beach cleanups, hikes, canoe and kayak trips, cruises, and workshops across the nation. In 2014, 69 events engaged 19,149 volunteers in a combined 83,846 hours of service.

**Living Shorelines Initiative:** Restore America's Estuaries advocates for shoreline protection options that allow for natural coastal processes such as native plants, stones and sand fill to filter runoff and preserve natural wetland habitat. In 2013, The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Chesapeake Bay Trust, and Restore America's Estuaries co-hosted the 2013 Mid-Atlantic Living Shorelines Summit, an in-depth discussion of the state of science, policy, and practice of Living Shorelines in the Mid-Atlantic region.

# River Network

<http://www.rivernetwork.org/>



## Overview

Over the past 26 years, River Network has been at the forefront of expanding interest in protecting the waters of our country, encouraging diversity in the environmental movement, and helping engaged citizens to take a stand for their waters. Since 1988, River Network has accomplished their mission by investing in local efforts, and helping advance impact at more significant scales (system, state, regional, national). They offer one-on-one mentoring and consulting, virtual trainings, and conferences to strengthen local efforts; convene groups for greater impact; and increase the transfer of practical water management solutions.

## Mission

River Network envisions a future of clean and ample water for people and nature, where local caretakers are well-equipped, effective, and courageous champions for our rivers. Their mission directly supports this vision. River Network empowers and unites people and communities to protect and restore rivers and other waters that sustain all life.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

EPA has partnered up with River Network and Groundwork USA to establish the Urban Waters Learning Network to create and promote networking, provide technical assistance, and provide learning opportunities to more than 120 EPA Urban Waters grantees and other urban waters practitioners all over the country. The goal of the Urban Waters Learning Network is to improve impaired urban water resources – rivers, lakes, wetlands, and more – and the socioeconomically challenged communities around them by providing local organizations, and tribal and local governments with the skills and techniques to effectively restore these resources over time.

River Network also helps local champions – coalitions, organizations and leaders – become more effective, sustainable, and results-oriented, so they can have the greatest possible impact on our rivers and other waters. They have supported community-based organizations across many Federal Urban Waters locations, including **Anacostia, DC/MD** (i.e. Anacostia Riverkeeper, Anacostia Watershed Society, & Groundwork Anacostia); **Atlanta, GA** (i.e. West Atlanta Watershed Association); **Grand Rapids, MI** (i.e. Plaster Creek Stewards); **Seattle, WA** (i.e. Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition/TAG); and the **Western Lake Erie Basin, Toledo, OH** (i.e. Save the Maumee River).

River Network partners with local organizations to focus funding, skills, and learning around particular issues. Its members carefully select watersheds and issues that can provide replicable models and lessons learned for watershed groups all around the country. Examples include:

**Louisville, Kentucky (Beargrass Creek); Rochester, Michigan (Paint Creek); Rochester Hills, Michigan:** River Network has partnered with the Charles River Watershed Association (Boston, MA) and other organizations to disseminate the Blue Cities™ model to integrating water resources planning and urban development decision-making. Blue Cities™ integrates techniques such as Low Impact Development (LID), Green Building, Green Infrastructure, Green Corridors, and stormwater management to help solve problems and build a sustainable urban future. In the last two years, they have begun Blue Cities™ work in Beargrass Creek (Louisville, KY) and Paint Creek (Rochester & Rochester Hills, MI).

**Nashville, Tennessee:** River Network is working with Smart Growth America and Nashville city staff to calculate the proportion of the stormwater runoff coming from the local road system and to identify and cost of green street features to infiltrate that stormwater, with the long-term goal of reducing combined sewer overflows (CSOs). River Network's goal is to help enable the City of Nashville to

systematically incorporate green street features into their CSO abatement plan. This pilot Green Streets project will inform the development of a manual to help mid-sized cities nationwide implement green streets projects.

**Portland, Oregon (Willamette River):** River Network is working with restoration experts, city officials, private landowners, local organizations and economists to determine what motivates private riparian restoration, to help develop an identity for a 14-mile stretch of the Willamette River and, in turn, generate and coordinate interest in restoration within it.

**Salt Lake City, Utah (Jordan River):** River Network and various Partners are investigating how changes to flow management might enhance efforts to achieve water quality criteria for dissolved oxygen, while also improving ecosystem function in the lower Jordan River. As the project progresses, River Network has published a number of interim “Lab Reports” that summarize the approach, lessons learned, and future plans at key points in the process.

**Tacoma, Washington:** River Network, Stewardship Partners, Depave and the Pierce Conservation District have worked closely over the past 18 months to promote the idea of community “depaving” in the cities of Puyallup and Tacoma, introducing numerous community institutions, and community leaders to the benefits of increasing green spaces while addressing the water quality impacts of impervious surfaces. The team has performed its first demonstration projects in the North Slope neighborhood of Tacoma and on the grounds of a Catholic school in Puyallup, WA – another project in Tacoma is in the planning stages. This project is an effort to disseminate the “community depaving” approach more broadly.



## Overview

SavATree, the green choice for tree service and shrub care, provides environmentally sensible services to residential, commercial, historic, and government properties in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Mid-West. Services are performed by certified arborists and trained field specialists and include: tree care, tree assessment, and tree canopy planning at the site and landscape scales.

## Mission

SavATree's mission is to provide high-quality professional shrub and tree services performed by certified arborists and highly trained crews that help create a sustainable, beautiful, healthy, and safe tree canopy. Urban tree canopy assessed, planned for, monitored, and cared for by SavATree helps cities across the Chesapeake Bay and beyond reach water quality goals.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**Baltimore, Maryland:** SavATree provides project support to the U.S. Forest Service Northern Research Station, serving as Ambassador to the Baltimore Urban Waters Partnership. This partnership works with federal, state, local, NGO, and private partners to help improve water quality in Baltimore.

SavATree integrates and advances the primary elements of the Baltimore Urban Waters Partnership business plan through: 1) the Green Pattern Book, a set of typologies of green infrastructure projects; 2) Local Projects; 3) Models and Monitoring, including water quality, collaboration network, and land cover monitoring; and 4) Mapping of local projects using green infrastructure along with monitoring and collaborative networks. These are contextualized within a framework of outreach, education, adaptive management, and workforce development.

SavATree also facilitates linkages between the Baltimore Urban Waters Partnership and other agency efforts in Baltimore such as the Baltimore Ecosystem Study, a long-term ecological research project of the National Science Foundation, and the Baltimore Wood Project, a joint effort between the Forest Products Lab and the Northern Research Station.



## Overview

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 2.4 million members and supporters nationwide. In addition to creating opportunities for people of all ages, levels and locations to have meaningful outdoor experiences, the Sierra Club works to safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and litigation.

## Mission

The mission of the Sierra Club is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

The Sierra Club has a long legacy of involvement across the country, including in communities where the UWFP is currently supporting initiatives. Below are a few examples.

**Albuquerque, New Mexico:** Sierra Club uses action teams based in New Mexico's largest towns to work on the protection of nearby natural areas. Team members meet monthly to plan strategies including tabling, petitioning, presentations, and outings to build awareness about these natural areas. In Albuquerque, Sierra Club is working to protect the "Bosque," more formally known as Rio Grande Valley State Park, one of the only intact riparian areas within a city in the entire United States. The Bosque Action Team has a Bosquitos Committee, led by parents of young children, which runs monthly events to get families outdoors and teach them about the Bosque. The team also runs outings for all age groups to the Bosque in English and will soon offer Spanish-language outings. Sierra Club is also working with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (co-founded by Sierra Club) on a project to connect children and youth to the newest Urban Wildlife Refuge in America, Valle de Oro. Sierra Club helped to support the establishment of the Rio Grande del Norte and Organ Mountains Desert-Peaks as National Monuments, using the action team model to engage new leaders and volunteers.

**Baltimore, Maryland:** Climate change is already affecting the Mid-Atlantic States. Storms characterized by high rain intensity are becoming more frequent, leading to increases in polluted runoff into Maryland's rivers and streams and the already highly polluted Chesapeake Bay. Baltimore's watersheds are heavily impacted by pollution from past and current industrial activity and polluted runoff generated from its many impervious surfaces. The Maryland Sierra Club has been organizing city residents to support a five-year dramatic expansion of green practices designed to reduce polluted runoff, which will include tree plantings and construction of green infrastructure practices. Additionally, Sierra Club is advocating for inclusion of the impacts of climate change in the city's stormwater management plans.

**Detroit, Michigan:** Climate change in the Great Lakes region is increasing severe storms, with associated flooding, polluted runoff, sewage overflows, and beach closures. The most vulnerable neighborhoods are home to low-income persons and communities of color who have outdated water infrastructure, sit next to polluting industries, and are dominated by impermeable surfaces, such as rooftops and asphalt that worsen storm water runoff. In Detroit, Sierra Club is increasing green infrastructure (e.g. native plants, rain gardens, wetlands, trees, green roofs, and bioswales) to reduce the number and volume

of sewage overflows and extend the life of the city's wastewater system. More than 30 community leaders are now certified rain barrel trainers who promote installing rain barrels to reduce both storm water overflow and the high cost of water bills. Sierra Club also sponsors biking outings to show community leaders successful green infrastructure projects.

**Los Angeles, California:** Sierra Club has successfully connected underserved residents to the Angeles National Forest (ANF). Sierra Club spent years in the San Gabriel Valley and surrounding communities, learning about residents' lack of recreational opportunities, parks, open space, and voice in how the ANF's San Gabriel Mountains were being managed. Sierra Club empowered and trained local community leaders to become effective advocates. Today, the San Gabriel Mountains Forever (SGMF) coalition is a diverse partnership of more than one hundred city, business, faith, health, and conservation community leaders who are increasing equitable access and protections for the San Gabriel Mountains watershed. Sierra Club and SGMF played an important role in the recent establishment of the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument. Additionally, Sierra Club's Angeles Chapter and San Geronio Chapter (serving the Inland area of Southern California, Riverside and San Bernardino) support a strong network of citizen activists and local outings and run several open space campaigns throughout the counties.

**New Orleans, Louisiana:** New Orleans' high vulnerability to hurricanes and floods will only increase as the climate continues to warm. In the meantime, recovery from past storms continues. The restoration of Bayou Bienvenue and Bayou Sauvage is an important part of rebuilding the Lower Ninth Ward and New Orleans East because these bayous

provide both recreational opportunities and critical buffering against storms. The Sierra Club has been building relationships with diverse constituencies for more than 10 years throughout Louisiana and the Gulf Coast, but in particular with African American and Vietnamese communities in the Lower Ninth Ward and New Orleans East. Sierra Club works with the Vietnamese community in New Orleans East to clean up and restore Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, which protects the community from storm surges. Recently, Sierra Club installed accessible walkways so that disabled people can enjoy the bayou's beauty and sanctuary. Sierra Club also works with the Vietnamese American Youth Leadership Association to provide hiking and biking opportunities along the Maxent Canal for diverse communities in New Orleans East.

**Inspiring Connections Outdoors (ICO):** Sierra Club's volunteer-run ICO groups nationwide conduct more than 900 outings every year for approximately 15,000 participants, primarily youth from urban communities. ICO groups are in the following cities, towns, and counties: Birmingham (AL), Phoenix and Tucson (AZ), Los Angeles, Orange County, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, and San Jose (CA), Boulder and Denver (CO), Hartford and New Haven (CT), Washington (DC), Gainesville, Jacksonville, Miami, Manatee-Sarasota, Orlando, Tampa Bay and West Palm Beach (FL), Atlanta (GA), Chicago (IL), Bloomington (IN), Lexington and Louisville (KY), Baltimore (MD), Boston (MA), Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Grand Rapids (MI), Minneapolis/St. Paul (MN), St. Louis (MI), Las Vegas (NV), North Central (NJ), New York City (NY), Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill – Triangle (NC), Cincinnati and Cleveland (OH), Portland and Central Oregon/Bend (OR), Harrisburg and Philadelphia (PA), Nashville and Knoxville (TN), Austin, Dallas, El Paso, San Antonio, and Houston (TX), Seattle and Spokane (WA), and Madison (WI).

# Society of Municipal Arborists

<http://www.urban-forestry.com>



## Overview

The Society of Municipal Arborists (SMA) is an organization of municipal arborists and urban foresters as well as consultants, commercial firms, nonprofits, tree boards, tree wardens, allied professionals, and citizens who actively practice or support some facet of municipal forestry. As a professional affiliate of the International Society of Arboriculture, the SMA has members from across North America and beyond. SMA strives to promote and improve the practice of professional municipal arboriculture, stimulate interest in planting and presentation of shade trees and landscape plants, and promote public awareness of the beautification of urban areas with arboricultural practices.

## Mission

SMA aims to build the confidence, competence, and camaraderie of the family of professionals who create and sustain community forests.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

In partnership with other organizations and with assistance from the USDA Forest Service, SMA is developing collaboration tools to engage urban forestry professionals and emergency managers on a regional level to develop Vegetative Risk Management Plans (VRMP). The goals of a VRMP are to reduce the impact of storms on the urban forest, lessen personal injuries and property damage, and decrease emergency management cost. This project includes a Vegetation Risk Management Template and detailed instructions on how to develop the associated GIS tool, called the Urban Tree Risk Index.

SMA has recently developed a set of Urban Forestry Best Management Practices for use by municipal arborists, planners, urban foresters, concerned citizens, green industry professionals, or anyone interested in creating and sustaining trees and green space in their communities. They are designed to be simple, easy-to-understand, and versatile for anyone wishing to explain, understand, or investigate the many ways in which green development makes good economic sense.

SMA sponsors the Municipal Forestry Institute, a comprehensive training program for people who plan, manage, or advocate for urban forestry programs and who want to become more effective leaders. The goal of the institute is to educate people in the leadership and managerial aspects of urban forestry.

SMA prints a bimonthly electronic magazine, called *City Trees*, which provides the latest news in urban forestry research, products, and services, and highlights communities around the world. They also provide information on their website to create networking and educational opportunities that promote the sound, professional management of urban forests.

For the past 50 years, SMA has held an annual conference and trade show in cities across North America, providing an opportunity for the urban forestry community to learn from the experience and expertise of its members.

The Society of Municipal Arborists has developed a peer-reviewed program that formally recognizes urban and community forestry programs for implementing excellent and comprehensive management practices. Accreditation is structured to build on the Arbor Day Foundation's successful Tree City USA designation by incorporating additional professional standards deemed important by SMA for managing municipal trees. It also applies to programs internationally, not just in the United States. SMA Accreditation sets a high bar, and offers the highest recognition for notable accomplishments.



SMA offers an exchange program for municipal arborists, including those working in the non-profit arena, in locations around the world. The purpose is to create a way for municipal arborists to exchange urban forestry expertise, management ideas, and technology through “in-person” contact and on-site experience. Not only does the program facilitate the transfer of knowledge, it helps foster an international community of municipal arborists.

With the ongoing threat of pests, SMA has developed a comprehensive approach to managing Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) through its position paper, toolbox, and webcast, all of which are available on the website to communities battling this destructive insect.

# Tree Care Industry Association

<http://tcia.org>



## Overview

Established in 1938 as the National Arborist Association, today's Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) is a trade association of more than 2,200 commercial tree care firms and affiliated companies. TCIA develops safety and education programs, standards of tree care practice, and management information for arboriculture firms around the world. The training materials are produced by arborists, for arborists, and tested in the field. TCIA also has the nation's only accreditation program that helps consumers find tree care companies that have been inspected and accredited based on adherence to industry standards for quality and safety, maintenance of trained and professional staff, and dedication to ethics and quality in business practices.

## Mission

TCIA works to advance the tree care business through the development of safety and education programs, standards of tree care practice, and management information for arboriculture firms around the world.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

TCIA holds trainings related to appropriate tree care practices and tree care industry trade shows and conferences, with some topics related to urban activities such as urban forestry and urban wood utilization.

The Tree Care Industry Association Foundation (TCIAF) is dedicated to advancing education and professional development in the green industry. Additionally the TCIAF works to improve safety and reduce accident rates in the tree care industry, and disseminate information key to practitioners and consumers about proper tree care.

TCIAF works to achieve these goals through the following:

- Financial support, which includes funding for the Robert Felix Memorial Scholarship Fund and expense reimbursement to schools attending Student Career Days
- Enterprise and workforce development, by facilitating job creation and illuminating career pathways in field of commercial/urban arboriculture
- Training, education, and program content, for employees and employers, which promotes a strong and sustainable safety culture within the company and employee team

# Trust for Public Land

<http://www.tpl.org/>



## Overview

The Trust for Public Land (TPL) creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Since 1972, The Trust for Public Land has protected more than 3 million acres and completed more than 5,200 park and conservation projects.

TPL believes that everyone should have the opportunity to connect with nature. And as research clearly shows, access to nature is an essential prescription for the physical, environmental, social, and economic health of a community.

TPL helps communities raise funds for conservation, conduct conservation research and planning, acquire and protect land, and design and renovate parks, gardens, and playgrounds. Today, nearly ten million people live within a ten-minute walk of a TPL park, garden, or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year.

## Mission

TPL creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

TPL is the only national organization working in cities and suburbs across America to ensure that everyone – in particular, every child – enjoys close to home access to a park, playground, or natural area. Today, nearly ten million Americans live within a ten-minute walk of a park or natural area created with TPL's help, and millions more visit these sites every year. As an organization, they are working toward a day when everyone has easy access to a safe, green place to play.

Through its *Parks for People*, *Climate Smart Cities*, and *Green Infrastructure* programs, TPL is working to help cities achieve clean urban waters, vibrant public park systems, and build livable, energy-efficient, and resilient communities.

TPL is engaged in many initiatives in communities where UWFP is also involved.

**Albuquerque, New Mexico:** TPL is working to preserve vital stretches of the Middle Rio Grande to safeguard fragile watershed, protect drinking water supplies, and revitalize river habitat for public enjoyment. Recent accomplishments include the creation of the Valle de Oro National Wildlife Refuge, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's first urban refuge in its southwest region. This new refuge – the culmination of over 10 years of community effort to protect one of the last undeveloped areas along the river in the park-poor South Valley section of Bernalillo County – is a successful partnership effort that drew funding support from state, local, private, and federal sources. The refuge's location within an hour's drive of 60 percent of New Mexico's population means that an important segment of the population will have an opportunity to learn about the importance of the Rio Grande to people and wildlife alike.

**Atlanta, Georgia:** TPL is working with neighbors and the City of Atlanta to transform Proctor Creek with a greenway trail system. When complete, the greenway will connect the BeltLine to the Chattahoochee River and will connect neighborhoods to parks. TPL has also acquired some 33 properties as a partner in the Atlanta Beltline project, a 22 mile loop of historic railroad that circles downtown and midtown Atlanta. The mostly abandoned rail corridor connects 45 diverse neighborhoods, including many of the city's most underserved by parks, and provides an extraordinary opportunity to link parks, trails, and transit to foster more livable communities.

**Denver, Colorado:** TPL has helped in developing a plan for future open space, and is mapping existing green infrastructure in the Denver Metro area. The study area includes 13 major rivers and streams and will map parks, trails, and riparian corridors. The information will be used to plan for green spaces for communities without access to open space.

**Los Angeles, California:** TPL and its partners have been working for several years to transform the Los Angeles River from a forgotten concrete channel into a usable river greenway. The vision consists of a network of parks, trails, natural areas, and community spaces linking 13 cities and 25 communities along the 51-mile length of the river. The majority of these communities lack parks, bike paths, and walkways, and many suffer from environmental degradation, poor-quality housing, and aging school facilities. The project aims to help combat the health impacts of obesity and inactivity, and to provide new recreation opportunities to millions. Currently, TPL is working to create a new park - The Reseda River Loop - at the point where Aliso Creek joins the Los Angeles River.

**Newark, New Jersey:** TPL worked in partnership with the Essex County Parks System to establish the city's first waterfront park, including a greenspace to play and a connection to the Passaic River. The partners are continuing their work to include a second riverfront park segment, including a walking and biking trail, floating boat dock, riverfront boardwalk, and other settings for relaxation, picnics, exercise, and environmental education.

**New York City, New York:** TPL has worked in partnership with Pratt Institute to develop a "greenprint" based on the community's input and vision, for a waterfront on the Bronx side of the Harlem River. The waterfront design will include green infrastructure to reduce stormwater runoff, and community gardens. TPL, through its Climate Smart Cities program, is also partnering with the City of New York, Columbia University, and Drexel University to create green buffers like wetlands and waterfront parks to protect the city from future storm events. Important new research suggests that New York City's risk of coastal flooding has

increased twenty-fold since 1844 thanks to one foot of sea level rise and an additional one-foot increase in flood levels from a "ten-year" storm event.

**Philadelphia, Pennsylvania:** Through its Parks for People-Philadelphia program, TPL is playing a key role in implementing the Green2015 Initiative to transform 500 acres of land into neighborhood green spaces by 2015. TPL works with the City of Philadelphia to identify existing schoolyards and recreation centers as prime opportunities for conversion into greened play spaces and recreation areas. The recently completed green schoolyard at William Dick Elementary School along with a groundbreaking of a similar project at Hank Gathers Recreation Center are examples of the work TPL is doing to leverage Philadelphia Water Department funds directed toward meeting federally-mandated stormwater management regulations, committed state funding through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), and private philanthropy raised by TPL.

# U.S. Water Alliance

<http://www.uswateralliance.org/>



## Overview

The U.S. Water Alliance was established in 2008 to break down the “silos” and provide sector-wide leadership for building a national platform for holistic water policy. The Alliance is committed to uniting people and policy for water sustainability in a changing climate. That means convening, inspiring, and educating to change the way America views, values, and manages water—from quantity to quality, above and below ground. The Alliance emphasizes the importance and value of each aspect of the water cycle and promotes more integrated, sustainable management of water and watersheds (a concept we call “one water” management). The Alliance focuses on changing old paradigms, such as shifting the perception of water from invisible to invaluable and integrating more green infrastructure into the gray.

## Mission

The U.S. Water Alliance’s mission is to advance a national water vision that values water, integrates, and coordinates for “one water” sustainability, and innovates for the future.

Tagline: “Uniting People and Policy for *One Water* Sustainability”

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

**A National Water Vision:** The Alliance is developing principles of sustainability through national dialogues, roundtables, and meetings. Shrinking budgets and increasing demands are putting pressures on the water sector overall to embrace innovation, integration, and collaboration like never before. Engaging water association leaders to develop a national water policy framework helps to unify our voices and coordinate our efforts. The Alliance’s goal is to collaborate on a flexible framework that highlights the value of water and the need for specific and sustainable actions.

**U.S. Water Prize:** Created, sponsored, and administered by the Alliance on an annual basis, the U.S. Water Prize is the first of its kind to honor individuals and organizations that have made outstanding achievements in protecting and improving the health and wealth of water and watersheds throughout America.

**The Value of Water Coalition:** The U.S. Water Alliance manages the Value of Water Coalition, which unites public and private sector leaders, utilities, and organizations to bolster public support for protecting water and investing in its future. The Alliance helps to plan and carry out the Coalition’s public awareness campaign, curates the Coalition’s online presence, including its website and social media feeds, and oversees current and new member relations and development. The Alliance continues to be a leader in shaping the *Water Works! Campaign*, a high-profile project of the Coalition to promote the economic, environmental, and social benefits of water infrastructure investment.

**Urban Water Sustainability Council:** The Council helps usher in the paradigm shift toward green infrastructure and resource recovery for water sustainability in a changing climate. It provides a forum for urban leaders in the fields of water, sustainability, infrastructure, planning, politics, and science to meet and share ideas and strategies for creating green, sustainable cities.

Activities supported by the Council include:

- Hosting an annual One Water Leadership Summit where urban water pioneers are showcased for their innovative approaches to water management
- A united voice with other partner organizations to inform stormwater and other urban water regulations and guidelines
- Forums to allow the easy transfer of knowledge among Council members on local issues of finance, law, policies, practices, regulations, and legislation.

**Business Advisory Council:** Working through the Council, the Alliance gathers suggestions on ways to spur innovation in technology and regulation, advance public-private partnerships, and underscore the value of water



through communications strategies and pricing dialogues. The Business Advisory Council has convened national dialogues and roundtables on the economics of water, technology innovation, and water quality trading.

**One Water Network:** The Alliance convenes leaders from an array of organizations to advance integrated, holistic watershed management (what the Alliance refers to as One Water Management). The network focuses on exploring the gaps, policy priorities, and research needs for urban watersheds. There is recognition among researchers and others that shifting the water paradigm will involve more than technical solutions but require a collaboration of leaders to meet challenges posed on the regulatory, policy, and institutional fronts, which is why the Alliance hosts the One Water Leadership Summit.

# Wilderness Inquiry

<http://www.wildernessinquiry.org/>



## Overview

Wilderness Inquiry (WI) is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to sharing high quality outdoor adventures with people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. Since 1978, WI has served over 375,000 people on trips throughout the world doing activities like canoeing, kayaking, hiking, camping, horseback riding, and more. Through five different programs—Share the Adventure, Families Integrating Together, Gateway to Adventure, Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures, and Canoemobile—Wilderness Inquiry engages anyone and everyone in the outdoors in their backyard or across the globe.

## Mission

WI's mission is to connect people from all walks of life to the natural world through shared outdoor adventures. Through the medium of outdoor adventure travel, WI inspires personal growth, enhanced awareness of the environment, and community integration. WI adventures encourage people to open themselves to new possibilities and opportunities.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

WI conducts a number of programs designed to share the benefits of outdoor adventures with urban youth, families, and people with disabilities. Each year, WI conducts more than 400 events, serving more than 24,000 people.

The Share the Adventure and Families Integrating Together programs are an opportunity for families, couples, and individuals to experience nature, whether they are outdoor novices or seasoned veterans. The Gateway to Adventure program assists and trains people with disabilities to develop communication, leadership, and outdoor skills that translate into their everyday lives. The Urban Wilderness Canoe Adventures (UWCA) and Canoemobile programs engage more than 19,000 youth each year in introductory outdoor experiences, looping them in to a network of opportunities for continued engagement in the outdoor sector.

The UWCA and Canoemobile program are built on a collective impact model, a broad cross-sector coordination of local organizations, civic groups, state entities, and federal agencies that work together, share resources, and make large-scale impact on a collective basis. Wilderness Inquiry's Canoemobile is a roving fleet of vans, each with six 24' Voyageur canoes and a crew of outdoor educators that travels across America to bring outdoor literacy to urban youth and engage them on the waterways in their communities. In coordination with partners such as NPS, EPA, USGS, DOI, Army Corps, and many more, the Canoemobile has engaged youth in more than 26 cities including **Washington DC, New York, Chicago, Detroit, Atlanta, and Louisville**. These cities do, and will continue, to align with the EPA's designated urban waters locations, paddling on rivers like the **Harlem, Anacostia, Passaic, Delaware**, and more.

# Wildlife Conservation Society

<http://www.wcs.org/>



## Overview

The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), founded in 1895, has the clear mission to save wildlife and wild places across the globe. WCS began in the early 1900's when it successfully helped the American bison recover on the Western Plains. Today, WCS protects many of the world's iconic creatures in North America and abroad, including gorillas in the Congo, tigers in India, wolverines in the Yellowstone Rockies, and ocean giants in amazing seascapes.

## Mission

WCS saves wildlife and wild places worldwide through science, conservation action, education, and inspiring people to value nature.

## Urban Activities Potentially Related to the Partnership

WCS currently manages about 500 conservation projects in more than 60 countries, and educates millions of visitors its four zoos and aquarium in New York City on important issues affecting the planet. WCS parks include: the Bronx Zoo, New York Aquarium, Central Park Zoo, Prospect Park Zoo, and Queens Zoo. Within the Bronx Zoo 26,000-square-foot Wildlife Health Center (WHC), WCS vets now diagnose ailments via endoscopic procedures, X-rays, ultrasounds, and an in-house clinical laboratory. The New York Aquarium's Aquatic Animal Health Center performs complex diagnostic, surgical, and follow-up care in a 15,000-square-foot medical and research center.

WCS is committed to conservation efforts in its own backyard. WCS's ambitious New York Seascape conservation program combines research, education, and policy to protect critical habitat and species within the coastal and ocean waters of the New York tri-state area. It is a joint initiative of the New York Aquarium and the WCS-Marine Program.

The Bronx Zoo's Mitsubishi Riverwalk nature trail protects acres of the Bronx River watershed and highlights the many native species that thrive here. WCS has been working to rehabilitate the river's passageways for native fish such as alewife herring in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

Other WCS Bronx River projects include a study of songbirds' habitat that stop over at the Bronx Zoo's riverbanks as they wing their way toward their northern breeding and southern wintering grounds. Bronx Zoo ornithologists are studying the migrants to determine whether they are able to get their fill of bird food in New York's crucial stopover points.

On October 23, 2014, WCS and NOAA held a Symposium on **Bronx River Restoration**. Plenary sessions included speakers from the Bronx River Alliance, Yale University, National Park Service, NOAA, and other conservation and watershed organizations.

# URBANWATERS

FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

*Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities*