



the river REPORTER

Best Management Practice: Green Roofs

A Green Roof Primer

The term green roof can be defined many ways, however in an environmental context, green roofs are rooftop installations of natural vegetation that enable a building or business to reduce their impact on the surrounding environment. From managing stormwater runoff to decreasing heating and cooling costs for the organization, green roofs are considered a best management practice (BMP) for those interested in reducing impact on the environment.

As part of the Clean Water Act, stormwater management is regulated and green roof technology is a great solution. In the Chicago River Watershed area with combined sewer stormwater systems, heavy storms can overload the wastewater system causing it to flood, dumping raw sewage into local waterways. In the separated sewer area, the sewers contain only stormwater, however, stormwater picks up pollutants like road salt, fertilizers and motor oil and dumps it straight into the river. Green roofs decrease the total amount of stormwater runoff and slow the rate of runoff from the roof. The roofs retain large amounts of rainwater, gradually releasing it back into the atmosphere via condensation and transpiration, while retaining pollutants in their soil. The soil acts as a filter for air and water pollutants.

In addition to keeping stormwater out of the river, green roofs have many other benefits. They include: reducing the urban

heat island effect, serving as insulation, increasing the lifespan of the roof by protecting its structure, lowering energy consumption, providing green space for building occupants, and amazingly, increasing wildlife by providing shelter and habitat for birds and small mammals.

Green roofs are a relatively new concept and have become increasingly popular in the United States. Chicago is among a handful of cities across the nation to encourage the implementation of this technology. Chicago City Hall was one of the first in the country to install a green roof as an experiment to better understand the benefits and effects. Since then, the City has passed codes offering incentives to builders who install green roofs and other BMPs. Other municipalities and corporations in our region have also adopted green roof technology.

North Branch Watershed Project BMP Funding

The North Branch Watershed Project (NBWP) is a collaborative framework including a wide variety of stakeholders: Friends of the Chicago River, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (our co-coordinator in the project) and other participants, such as municipalities and neighborhood groups, work together to shape watershed-wide solutions related to the problems caused by runoff pollution and other factors. The NBWP, which functions in the North Branch sub-watershed (where sewers are separated), funds a variety of BMPs, ranging from

green roofs to permeable pavement projects to wetland restoration.

Friends provides leadership, community organizing, advocacy and funding strategies for research projects, position papers, real estate development proposals, and educational and stewardship activities. Through the NBWP funding component (with federal 319 funds), a selection committee has distributed over \$9 million to community-based participants since 1999, as well as extensive technical assistance for project development and execution. The results of this work helps shape systemic, lasting solutions for the river's health. The net effect is less water gets into the sewers at all.

(story continued on page 5)

Pilot Project for the River

Friends has a new demonstration site at the Volunteer Resource Center (VRC) along the North Branch of the Chicago River, adjacent to the Forest Preserve District of Cook County's Edgebrook Woods. This pilot project provides an ongoing, hands-on restoration site for work that will directly benefit the river and educate volunteers to be good stewards. Through the VRC, we offer opportunities to work on a focused project that will have a cumulative effect on the health of the site and the river. Volunteers implement simple best management practices (BMPs) to be replicated throughout the watershed.



WADING IN Passion for the River

Watching the debate between scientists and lawyers last week at the Illinois Pollution Control Board hearings was an eye-opening experience. The hearings are the current phase of the ongoing debate about local water quality standards including those for the Chicago River system. The scientists were from the Illinois EPA. The lawyers represented the dischargers. I wondered, as I listened, who else should be in the room.

Polite, articulate, and careful not to antagonize, both sides articulated their positions, believing with all sincerity that their position was correct: either keep it to business as usual or, as the Illinois EPA recommends, upgrade water quality standards for the Chicago River.

What I found largely absent throughout these hearings was any exhibition of the passion that we all feel as friends of the Chicago River and admirers of its free and wild nature. While discussing background temperature, there was no mention of school children in waders laughing as they discover one-inch crawfish under rocks at LaBagh Woods. In debates about human-sourced bacteria, no one said anything about splashing water and the excited anticipation of paddlers during the Flatwater Classic. As they reiterated that river habitat is improving, no one spoke of peaceful silence interrupted by an occasional shout from someone fishing at River Park, Bubbly Creek, or Blue Island.

Excluding the passion from the water quality discussion makes it almost possible to imagine choosing not to invest in the infrastructure we need. But a decision made without passion dismisses the needs

of the great blue heron I saw on my way home that day and the desires of the college crew team I saw out on the river the next day. A decision made without passion means no more change, no more improvement.

Twenty-nine years ago it was passion that started Friends of the Chicago River and it is passion today that inspires us now as we work through the tactical stages of our new strategic plan; the result of a seven-month journey with input from many. Among the most exciting outcomes of our planning process was the addition of a formal values statement. Ranging from demanding creative and strategic thinking, to ensuring responsible stewardship, to conducting our business through a collaborative and non-adversarial approach, the values articulate who we are and who we want to be.

Good strategic planning is time-consuming and challenging work. And inseparable from these values, measurables, and tactics is passion. And that passion is always there — for the Chicago River sparkling in the sunshine, for the children we bring there to discover it, for kayaks gliding by, and the knowledge that we stand by our convictions and fight for what we believe is right.

The hearings at the Pollution Control Board aren't over. And there is plenty more to say. I intend to say some of it. Will you join me for the rest?

—Margaret Frisbie
Executive Director

STAFF & BOARD

The River Reporter is published by Friends of the Chicago River, located at 28 E. Jackson Blvd., Suite 1800, Chicago, IL 60604-2272. Phone: (312) 939-0490 Web site: chicagoriver.org

Friends' mission is to preserve, protect and foster the vitality of the Chicago River for the plant, animal and human communities within its watershed.

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CHEERS

If you exercise and play outdoors in the Chicago area, you may be eligible to participate in a research study that looks at the connection between outdoor recreation and public health.

Friends of the Chicago River is partnering with the University of Illinois (UIC) School of Public Health on a three-year research study of people who use the river for recreation. The research study is called CHEERS — the Chicago Health, Environmental Exposure and Recreation Study. The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is funding the study.

The UIC research team will track the health of people before and after river recreation. Stay tuned to find out more about the CHEERS project. For more information, contact Cynthia Fox at (312) 939-0490, ext. 13, or cfox@chicagoriver.org.



Kubert family paddling

RIFFLES & CURRENTS

River Summit Date Announced

As part of the Suburban Mayors Caucus spring 2008 meeting schedule, Friends of the Chicago River in partnership with the Office of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley, will host the 4th annual River Summit: Green Solutions for Stormwater Management. Attendees will include 60 suburban mayors and over 100 participants including municipal staff responsible for implementing green infrastructure and local environmental groups, as well as other Chicago River stakeholders.

The River Summit, founded in 2004 in partnership with Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, is an annual event that focuses on identifying sustainable solutions for the issues that impact the Chicago River. This year's theme is the promotion of green infrastructure as part of comprehensive stormwater management programs and will focus on providing information and real world examples. The program agenda will include presentations on green stormwater BMPs and examples of how they have been implemented in the region.

Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley will be the keynote speaker.

If you are interested in attending the River Summit, please contact John Quail, director of watershed planning, at jquail@chicagoriver.org for application materials.

Spring Cleaning for the Planet

Most people are surprised that household cleaners and familiar electronics are terribly toxic to the earth. Seemingly innocuous cleaners and electronics often contain hazardous materials such

as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), ethylene glycol, anti-bacterial agents, mold inhibitors, toxic binding agents, formaldehyde, lead, mercury, and PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls). When they are thrown out with regular garbage, these materials contaminate the air, soil and water.

Last year the City of Chicago made it easier for Chicagoans to keep hazardous materials and computers out of our landfills by opening the Household Chemicals & Computer Recycling Facility on Goose Island at 1150 N. North Branch St., Chicago.

This facility, located just east of the Kennedy Expressway (I-90), allows people to drop off oil-based paints, household batteries, paint thinners, used motor oil, herbicides, drain cleaners, insecticides, lawn chemicals, pesticides, solvents, old gasoline, antifreeze, pool chemicals, hobby chemicals, cleaning products, aerosol paints, mercury, and fluorescent lamp bulbs. The facility does not accept business/commercial sector wastes, explosives and fireworks.

The incredibly easy-to-use operation has signs posted indicating the specific drop-off spots for specific materials (electronics, other household hazards, etc.) and during business hours an attendant is outside to collect your waste right from your car. The facility hours vary day to day so the best way to plan your drop is to check the Chicago Streets and Sanitation website or call 3-1-1. If you do not live in Chicago check your city's website for other ways to dispose of harmful trash.

Awards Reward Efforts

Friends' efforts to improve the Chicago River through on-the-ground projects and education were rewarded in 2007 through recognition by four separate awards; two for the Michigan Avenue Fish Hotel and two for the McCormick Tribune Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum.

The Michigan Avenue Fish Hotel, the Adopt A River Downtown project that was sponsored in 2007 by The Boeing Company, Chicago Environmental Fund, and Nuveen Investments, is Friends' pilot fish habitat project. It was established in 2005 and since then has successfully demonstrated that constructed fish habitat can replace natural habitat in urbanized areas. In 2007 it was home to a muskrat who lived and dined there most of the summer.

The Fish Hotel received a Conservation and Native Landscaping Certificate from Chicago Wilderness and the US EPA and a GreenWorks award from the City of Chicago.

The Bridgehouse Museum, located on the southwest corner of the Michigan Avenue Bridge, tells the history of the Chicago River and its story of hope. Friends of Downtown gave the museum the Welcome to Downtown award, which recognizes outstanding achievements that promote downtown and help make it the well-designed, vibrant, economic heart of the city. In November the Commission on Chicago Landmarks gave Bridgehouse Museum a Chicago Landmark Award for Preservation Excellence in the Interpretation/Education category.

HIGH Water Marks

Friends recognizes the generous support of members and donors who gave gifts of \$100 or more between June 2, 2007 and February 29, 2008.

INDIVIDUALS

\$5,000 and up

Parker and Julie Hall
Ted Oppenheimer

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\$20,000 to \$39,000

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HOK - Hellmuth, Obata +
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Recycling Service
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River North Residence
Association
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\$100 to \$499

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Baetis Environmental Services,
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Eastland Disaster Historical
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Inc.
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Chicago Riverwalk — Phase One

The Chicago Department of Transportation is pleased to announce that construction of the first phase of the Chicago Riverwalk will begin this summer. The underbridge connections for the Michigan Avenue and Wabash Avenue bridges are scheduled to be substantially completed by the end of 2008 with landscaping finishes in the spring of 2009.

The projects include a 17-foot build-out from the south bank of the Main Branch of the Chicago

River along Wacker Drive from State Street to the east side of Michigan Avenue. Pedestrians will be able to walk continuously along the new Riverwalk underneath the bridges all the way from State Street to the lakefront trail. Decorative lighting, landscaping and protective canopies underneath the bridges are also included in the projects.

Future build-out of the Riverwalk between State Street and to Franklin Avenue will occur as funding becomes available. The City's goal

is to complete a pedestrian promenade along the entire south bank of the Main Branch, allowing for continuous access at the river level underneath every bridge.

In the fall of 2007, Mayor Daley established a Riverwalk Development Committee to help the City with the design and vision of the Chicago Riverwalk and to assist with attracting private investment to the project. Friends of the Chicago River serves on this committee.

—Michelle Woods, *project manager*
Chicago Department of Transportation

(cover story continued from page 1)

The Village of Glenview

One particular recipient of 319 funding through the North Branch Watershed Project is the Village of Glenview. Their green roof project at the Evelyn Pease Tyner Interpretive Center was funded as a BMP.

Their project was part of the redevelopment of the former Glenview Naval Air Station. The Village of Glenview decided to preserve approximately 14 acres of remnant prairie along with 18 acres of old field buffer habitat as the Air Station Prairie. To enhance the educational value of the prairie, the Village built the Evelyn Pease Tyner Interpretive Center (EPTIC). The EPTIC incorporates innovative design features such as a green roof and permeable pavement. The use of these features significantly reduces the amount of stormwater runoff compared to conventional construction. The design also filters the runoff, thus enhancing water quality within the West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago River watershed.

The Glenview project (which is now owned and operated by the Glenview Park District) contributes to improved water quality through a focus on retaining and filtering stormwater on-site using strategies such as the green roof, but also permeable pavement, retaining native vegetation, replanting with natives where landscaping is necessary, and interpretive signs discussing these techniques.

Robyn Flakne, natural resources manager for Glenview, affirms the educational value of the center. "Our project employs BMPs that enhance water quality of this area but also serves as a site for people to learn about the environment — the health of the prairie and the related health of the river."

As taken from Glenview's project report, key benefits of the Evelyn Pease Tyner Interpretive Center include: *Stormwater retained on site* — this principle drove the choice to select a green roof system, to disturb as little of the original landscape as possible, and restore native species where site disturbance occurred. This results in a vast reduction of runoff as compared to conventional construction practices, and thus enhance water quality within the West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago River. *Education as a primary mission of the building* — achieved using both formal programs and

informal, unscheduled visits. Among the topics covered in signs and interpretive displays are history of the Midwestern prairie, plants and animals of the prairie, prairie restoration practices, water absorbing properties of land remaining in native vegetation, and benefits of green construction techniques, including the green roof.

The Village of Glenview is just one example in the growing number of green projects — specifically implementing the many beneficial characteristics of green roofs. Friends continues to be involved in the NBWP seeking to fund BMPs that can help our environment and the health of the Chicago River.

Starting this summer, Friends invites participation in our new demonstration project where we will focus on river improvement through BMPs (see sidebar, page 1).

Bridgehouse Corporate Club

Friends recently launched the Bridgehouse Museum Corporate Club, membership program. With levels ranging from \$100 to \$5,000, benefits include museum passes for employees and clients, private guided tours, community recognition, and more.

Membership proceeds are being matched \$1 for \$1 by McCormick Tribune Foundation's \$100,000 challenge grant awarded to Friends in 2007 for capacity building at our museum. Our Corporate Club launch is generously supported through advertisements by our lead Corporate Club member, Crain's Chicago Business.

To find out how your company can join as a founding member, visit www.bridgehousemuseum.org.

See calendar on page 7 for museum location and hours.



The Bridgehouse Museum Corporate Club welcomes our founding members (as of March 1).

Presidium Circle
Crain's Chicago Business
Pircher, Nichols & Meeks

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Friends in the News

Friends of the Chicago River continues to work strategically and diligently each day, promoting the message of a healthy river. One of the most challenging things for us, as is the case with most nonprofits, is bringing attention to our cause in an effort to inform the public and to garner more support for our mission. Our organization is very fortunate in that regard. Friends' staff, board and volunteers work hard to spread the word about a clean and healthy Chicago River that can benefit the plants, animals, and people who call it home.

According to coverage from last September alone, our work has paid off and our message is being heard! Friends received media coverage from the *Chicago Sun-Times*, *chicagorealestatedaily.com*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Crain's Chicago Business*, *Gear Technology*, *WBBM-TV*, and *WBEZ*. September 2007 coverage about the Chicago River and Friends included:

- Completing Deep Tunnel to clean up the river
- Improving water quality standards to protect people and fish
- Michigan Avenue Fish Hotel, Friends' innovative wildlife habitat project
- New amenities on the downtown riverwalk
- Paddling the river in our annual Chicago River Flatwater Classic canoe and kayak race

- Innovation and splendor of movable bridges along the Chicago River
- Historic preservation award for Friends' McCormick Tribune Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum

Our organization does not pay a public relations firm, nor do we employ a full-time media professional on staff. It is the significance of our message, hard work of all our employees — along with our reputation as a credible, collaborative, and non-adversarial agency — that has earned us steady media attention. And of course, it is the support of our many key contributors that enables us to keep Friends' work in the news. The result is priceless. In just one month, several of Friends' core principles reached a total print circulation of 7.6 million.

Through all of our events and activities, we seek to preserve, protect, and foster the vitality of the Chicago River for the human, plant, and animal communities within its watershed. We are grateful to all of our friends who share a passion for the Chicago River and share the work of promoting our mission.

riverLIFE

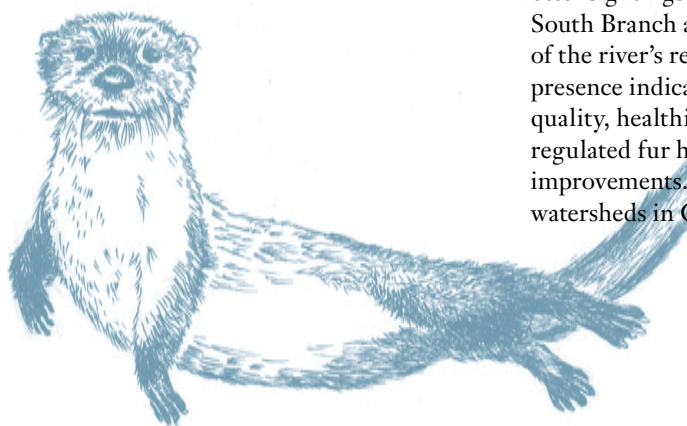
Otters belong to the family *Mustelidae* along with badgers, mink, skunks, weasels and wolverines. North American river otters are usually three-to-four feet long, weigh about 20 pounds, and can live up to 12 years in the wild.

Otter pups are born in the spring, weighing about four-and-a-half ounces, but grow quickly, learning to swim in about two months. They are superbly adapted to their aquatic lifestyle with a waterproof coat of dense soft fur. Their sleek body shape helps them zip through the water, propelled by a thick, muscular tail. Otters have webbed feet — large, powerful hind feet for movement and smaller, more dexterous front feet for manipulating food.

River otters prefer rivers, streams, lake margins, and freshwater marshes, and live in constructed or acquired dens. Otters are opportunistic feeders, eating whatever is readily available and easiest to catch. They love eating birds, crabs, crayfish, fish, frogs, rodents, turtles, and many other aquatic invertebrates. Otters are nearsighted above water but have excellent underwater vision. Stiff whiskers, sensitive

to water turbulence, are used to hunt for prey in dark, muddy water. Otters have been known to swim in circles, creating a whirlpool that brings up fish hiding on the bottom of the river or lake.

Although otters forage mostly in water, they are equally at home on land, and can run at speeds up to 18 miles per hour. They bound in a loping fashion, with their backs arched. Playful creatures, otters often combine running with a slide in the mud, ice or snow. They have an accelerated metabolism that gives them seemingly endless energy.



North American River Otter
Illustration by Jen Pagnini

River otters disappeared a century ago as the population and development in Chicago boomed. Historically, fur trapping was the greatest threat to otters.

Remnant populations in outlying watersheds also declined as a result of water pollution, overfishing, and habitat destruction. As recently as 25 years ago, 30,000 pelts were taken each year. Otters were placed on the Illinois state endangered list by 1989, when there were thought to be fewer than 100 otters statewide.

Luckily, it isn't over for the river otter yet. In the 1990s, more than 300 otters from Louisiana were reintroduced into the Illinois wetlands, in hopes of rebuilding the once-strong otter population. Recent otter sightings on the Chicago River's South Branch are an encouraging sign of the river's recovering health. Their presence indicates improving water quality, healthier fish populations, better-regulated fur harvests, and other habitat improvements. Today, almost all the watersheds in Cook County have otters.

—Mark Hauser
Education Coordinator

CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND TOURS

Greg Trooper Concert

Saturday, April 26, 7 p.m.
 Indian Boundary Park Fieldhouse
 2500 West Lunt Avenue, Chicago
 \$20 at the door

Come enjoy a musical evening with singer/songwriter Greg Trooper. Trooper has a critically acclaimed style that uniquely combines the sounds of his mentors, Otis Redding, Bob Dylan, and Hank Williams. You can be sure that when Greg Trooper is singing everyone within earshot is up and dancing! Join us for a rockin' good time!

This intimate concert benefits Friends of the Chicago River and Friends of Boone Elementary School.

For more information, call Kate at (773) 743-2691.

Bridgehouse Museum Opens

Friends' McCormick Tribune Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum will open May 1. Museum hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday through Monday, through October 31. Visit www.bridgehousemuseum.org for more information.

"We truly have something for everyone here," explains Ozana Balan, Friends' Bridgehouse Museum manager. "Nature, history, and stories of human will and ingenuity converge in this unique space. The fascinating facts you discover on each floor inspire a new appreciation for both the Chicago River and our city."

Visit www.bridgehousemuseum.org for more information.



Greg Trooper

For more information about any of our events, please visit www.chicagoriver.org.

APRIL

Greg Trooper Concert

Saturday, April 26, 7 p.m.
 Indian Boundary Park Fieldhouse
 \$20 at the door.
 See sidebar for more details.

MAY

Des Plaines River Canoe Marathon

Sunday, May 18, 2008
 Founded in 1957 by Ralph Frese (www.canoemarathon.com/ralph.cfm), this is the second oldest continual canoe race in the United States. The race is 18 miles (www.canoemarathon.com/course.cfm) on the beautiful and historic Des Plaines River. Everyone is

welcome to participate. For more information see www.canoemarathon.com

Chicago River Day

Saturday, May 10
 9 a.m.-12 noon, Workday
 12 Noon to 3 p.m., Festival
 Friends of the Chicago River and 3,900 volunteers gather for a day of hands-on environmental work and celebration along 156 miles of the Chicago River. See attached flyer for more information.

Big Fish Ball

Thursday, June 26, 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.
 Unique river-centric spectacles will be the centerpiece of this one-of-a-kind gala. This event will take place at The Merchandise Mart's Riverside Drive — between the Wells St. and Franklin St. Bridges on the north side of the river.

STAY TUNED...

Canoe trips

Check our website soon for upcoming spring and summer canoe trips!

Chicago River Flatwater Classic

Sunday, September 14
 Save-the-date and stay tuned for more information about this exciting annual paddling event presented by NAVTEQ.

YES! I want to help ensure a boundless future for the Chicago River!

I'm pleased to make a membership contribution to Friends of the Chicago River in the amount of:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$2,500.....Watershed Steward | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.....Bridge Tender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000.....Wetlands Restorer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50Family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$500.....River Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250.....Stream Keeper | <input type="checkbox"/> Other..... \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$156.....The 156-Mile Club
<i>(The River's length)</i> | |

Name _____

Company (if applicable) _____

For recognition purposes, list my name as _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Daytime phone _____ Email _____

My check made payable to Friends of the Chicago River is enclosed.

Charge my credit card (circle one): American Express Discover Mastercard Visa

Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____ 3-4 digit security code: _____

Name as it appears on credit card: _____

Cardholder's name and billing address (if different than above) _____

- I want to double my support through my company's matching gift program!
 Matching gift form enclosed Please contact me about how to arrange this

Please contact me about volunteer opportunities.

The best way to reach me is by: Email Daytime phone Old fashioned mail

Please do not add me to your email communications list

Your contribution is tax deductible. Please send it to Friends at 28 E. Jackson, Blvd., Suite 1800, Chicago, IL 60604-2272 or make your gift online at chicagoriver.org/get_involved/

All Friends of the Chicago River members receive:

- A subscription to Friends' River Reporter newsletter, filled with important information on issues that effect the Chicago River plus a calendar of river-related events
- Volunteer bulletins, email actions alerts, and other opportunities for hands-on involvement
- Invitations to Friends' special events like Chicago River Day, the Big Fish Ball, and Chicago River Flatwater Classic
- Discounts on Friends' canoe trips
- Listing in Friends' Annual Report

And most significantly...

- The reward of knowing that your membership contribution has a direct impact on improving the health and vitality of the Chicago River

Donors of \$250 and above are also eligible for additional recognition opportunities and more! Please contact Suellen Burns at (312) 939-0490, ext. 19, or sburns@chicagoriver.org for more information.

Join or renew online at chicagoriver.org.

Friends of the Chicago River is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization.

