



Illinois
Department of
**Natural
Resources**

JB Pritzker, Governor • Natalie Phelps Finnie, Director
One Natural Resources Way • Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271
www.dnr.illinois.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, Nov. 18, 2024

Media contact: dnr.pio@illinois.gov

IDNR announces more than \$1 million in grants for protection and management of Illinois' Lake Michigan shoreline

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Natural Resources [Coastal Management Program](#) has awarded \$1,075,395 in grants to Illinois organizations for coastal education, recreation, water quality protection, planning, and design and engineering projects along the Lake Michigan shoreline.

Through a federal-state partnership with the [National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, or NOAA](#), Illinois will pass through these federal funds to support local efforts that protect and restore the Illinois coast, reflecting both a national and local interest in Great Lakes restoration.

The 16 grant-funded projects span the entirety of the Illinois' Lake Michigan coastline and will empower communities, educational institutions, non-profits, park districts and forest preserve districts to improve the state's coastal resources and engage local youth and adults in stewardship and enjoyment of Lake Michigan and surrounding natural resources.

"It takes all of us working together to protect, preserve, and restore the Lake Michigan shoreline, and to ensure this wonderful resource can be enjoyed by all," **said Natalie Phelps Finnie, director of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.** "These grants represent an impressive range of investments in education, planning, and coastal resiliency in order to find solutions to unique challenges we face in Chicago and northeastern Illinois."

The 2024 Coastal Grants Program emphasized projects that reflect the program's commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion and that demonstrate a direct project benefit to communities and groups that have historically been underserved or disproportionately affected by environmental harms.

The 2024 Coastal Grant recipients and project titles are:

Chicago Audubon Society – \$22,325

Training leaders from diverse communities in birding leadership and bird conservation

Chicago Community Sculling – \$25,000

Rowing program executive director

Chicago Park District – \$100,000

Updating engineering designs for a water landing at Steelworkers Park

Faith in Place – \$74,136.35

Migration and Me Program, Cook and Lake counties

Friends of the Chicago River – \$145,000.69

Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance

Friends of the Forest Preserves – \$149,156.78

Outdoors for all: Deepening community engagement in forest preserves along the Little Calumet River

Friends of the Parks – \$42,632.60

Nature Along the Lake

Lake County Forest Preserve District – \$25,845

Branding scope development for the Lake Plain Partnership

Lake Forest Open Lands Association – \$64,954.10

Coastal area connections

Lakeview Roscoe Village Chamber of Commerce – \$50,000

Belmont-Diversey Trail

Lincoln Park Zoological Society – \$38,277.40

Explorando la Naturaleza with Lincoln Park Zoo and Latinos Progresando

Navy Pier – \$30,000

Preserve the People's Pier

OAI – \$100,000

Sharing services to maintain green stormwater infrastructure

Openlands – \$56,342.88

African American Heritage Water Trail curriculum

Urban Rivers – \$150,000

Revitalizing ecosystems and reconnecting communities to nature along Chicago's urban rivers

Wilmette Park District – \$1,725

Coastal parks interpretive signage

About the IDNR Coastal Management Program

The IDNR Coastal Management Program works to protect and enhance the environmental, economic, and social value of Illinois' Lake Michigan coast. The program fosters healthy ecosystems and resilient communities by providing expertise, funding, and other resources that:

- engage and connect communities within the Lake Michigan coastal region;
- enhance coastal stewardship;
- promote balanced use of coastal resources; and
- improve coordination between agencies, communities, and other partners.

To learn more about the program and future grant opportunities, [go online](#) or subscribe to the program's [newsletter](#).

###