

**Great Lakes Urban Habitat Restoration Symposium
January 22 - 23, 2009**

External Agenda - January 13, 2009

Agenda

January 22, 2008

- 7:00 – 8:00am** **Display set-up**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
- 7:00 - 8:30 am** **Registration**
Foyer of Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
- 8:30 – 8:45 am** **Welcome address**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
- Timothy J. Mitchell, Superintendent and CEO of the Chicago Park District
- 8:45 – 8:55 am** **Problem statement**
Dr. John E. Gannon, International Joint Commission
- 8:55 – 9:55 am** **Plenary session talks (4-20min)**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
Moderator: Amy Freeze, Chief Meteorologist, Fox News
1. **A Global View of Ecological Restoration and the Role of SER International** – George Gann, Executive Director of the Institute for Regional Conservation and Chair of the Board of the Society for Ecological Restoration International (SERI) will provide a global view of ecological restoration with examples from the Great Lakes region, Florida, Europe and beyond. He will use SERI's Primer on Ecological Restoration and other foundation documents to address restoration planning, attributes of restored ecosystems, restoration monitoring and other key elements of successful restoration design and implementation.
 2. **Enhancing Urban Habitat** – Dr. Jeff Schaeffer, Research Fishery Biologist, Great Lakes Science Center, will discuss principles of reconciliation ecology, but in particular examine ways in which it may be applied in the Great Lakes to provide cost-effective habitat preservation in urban environments. Reconciliation is the alteration of

the human landscape to conserve habitat. It represents a way to promote biodiversity in cases where traditional preservation or restoration approaches are not feasible.

3. **How Much Habitat is Enough?** - Graham Bryan of Canadian Wildlife Service - Ontario region, will be discussing How Much Habitat is Enough in terms of establishing minimum viable wildlife populations in the lower Great Lakes region. By looking at landscape ecology principles in relation to wildlife habitat needs he will explore the extent and quality of wetland, riparian and forest habitat to be considered in restoration and conservation planning and implications for rural, urban and urbanizing landscapes.

10:00 – 10:15 am **BREAK**

4. **Implications on Climate Change for Nearshore Areas in the Great Lakes Region** – Dr. Joel Scheraga, the National Program Director for Global Research Program and the Research Mercury Program in the US Environmental Protection Agency’s Office of Research and Development will be speaking on how climate change will pose significant risks to nearshore areas in the Great Lakes Region. Yet, opportunities exist to incorporate considerations of climate change into restoration projects to ensure their overall effectiveness in protecting water quality, nearshore habitats and beneficial uses in urban areas.

10:35 – 11:00 am **Panel discussion with plenary speakers**

11:00 – 11:50 am **Reports from:**
Great Lakes Habitat Initiatives – Michael Greer, Program Manager, US Army Corps of Engineers
Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Review Committee – William Culligan, Chair of GLFER, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement – Dr. Karen Vigmostad, Director, Great Lakes Regional Office, International Joint Commission
Restoring Fish and Wildlife in Great Lakes Areas of Concern – Matt Doss, Policy Director, Great Lakes Commission

12:00 – 1:00 pm **LUNCH**
Honore Ballroom - Hotel lobby
Sadhu Johnston, Chief Environmental Officer for the City of Chicago

Sadhu Johnston, the Chief Environmental Officer for the City of Chicago will present an overview of Chicago's efforts at becoming the greenest city in America. In particular, Mr. Johnston will talk about habitat

1:00 – 2:45pm Concurrent breakout sessions

Breakout sessions have been designed to allow for each speaker to deliver a twenty minute presentation. Speakers in the coastal/lacustrine, riverine, and wetland/plant community breakout sessions will discuss: 1) the ecological aspects of the habitat area including the achievable and desired functionality and productivity, 2) the anthropogenic aspects of the area including infrastructure demands on the habitat and services provided to humans, and 3) case studies. These case studies will provide insight on what science, tools and resources are currently available and needed for restoration work, as well as speak to successes, challenges, and lessons learned. The planning and implementation breakout session will consist of speakers who are 1) restoration project designers/managers that will speak to how funding and bureaucratic and monitoring constraints affect project design, timeline, and scale and, 2) funders speaking to how their agencies evaluate projects and predict ecological success from project design.

After the completion of the presentations, the speakers from each session will convene for a two hour facilitated panel discussion (to be led by a moderator) in which breakout participants will be encouraged to take part. The discussion will focus on determining what agencies/organizations are doing in the particular habitat area, the type of restoration work that is being done, and the areas in which current efforts and resources are parallel and where they intersect. Participants and panelists will also be asked to discuss if, in the cases where overlap is occurring, the overlap is beneficial or if it a duplication of effort. Research and resource gaps will also be discussed and participants will be asked to provide recommendations for addressing these gaps. Questions to discuss during breakout session are found on page 5 of this program.

1. Coastal/Lacustrine Areas

LaSalle 1 – 7 floor

Facilitator:, Dr. Karen Vigmostad, Director, Great Lakes Regional Office, International Joint Commission

Rapporteur: Jill Wingfield, Senior Communications Associate & Enforcement Policy Specialist, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Beginning with an initial overview of the challenges and barriers facing habitat restoration projects in urban areas, presentations in this will provide an assessment of several ongoing efforts from both an engineering and biological perspective.

- Dr. Scudder Mackey, Adjunct Professor, University of Windsor, will be presenting on the ecological aspects of coastal habitat areas. Based on his work, he will be discussing the barriers that

must be overcome when doing habitat restoration in urban environments.

- Dr. Phil Moy, Fisheries Biologist, Wisconsin Sea Grant, will present the results of an incidental habitat workshop in which engineers and biologists worked cooperatively to identify ways to improve fish habitat at navigation structures.
- Bill Weaver, Vice-President and Senior Principal Engineer, AECOM Great Lakes Coastline Habitat Restoration – Design Constraints and Opportunities. This presentation summarizes habitat restoration design constraints and opportunities that should be considered when implementing coastal project works in the Great Lakes. Several case histories are used to illustrate habitat conditions and restoration strategies for a variety of Great Lakes coastal environments.
- Gord MacPherson, Manager, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, will be presenting the strategic and site specific planning and implementation aspects of aquatic habitat restoration on the Toronto waterfront. Using this planning context, Gord will discuss the cooperative regulatory framework, habitat restoration techniques and the various projects that will revitalize Toronto's waterfront and improve aquatic habitat.
- Mary Lammert Khoury, Aquatic Ecologist/Conservation Planner, The Nature Conservancy, will present The Nature Conservancy and Nature Conservancy of Canada's Binational Conservation Blueprint, highlighting methods, distribution of significant biodiversity in urban areas, and current work to address urban threats to biodiversity conservation.

2. Riverine Areas

LaSalle 2 – 7th floor

Facilitator: John Perrecone, RAP/AOC Liaison, Environmental Protection Agency

Rapporteur: Brendan Daley, Executive Assistant for Green Initiatives, Chicago Park District

Each presenter in this session will discuss a specific case of urban riverine habitat restoration and provide thoughts on how the lessons learned in each specific case can be extended to guide future efforts.

- Dr. John Hartig, Refuge Manager, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge will present an overview of lessons learned from use of soft engineering techniques to rehabilitate Detroit River shorelines.
- Dr. Bruce Manny, Research Fishery Biologist, U.S. Geological Survey, will be presenting on two projects: 1) efforts to create lake

sturgeon spawning habitat in the Detroit River and 2) implications of habitat and population recovery for whitefish spawning in the Detroit River.

- Keith Bowers, Founder and President, Biohabitats, Inc. Regenerative stormwater conveyance (RSC) is an innovative approach to today's urban stormwater management challenges. Combining stream channel restoration with improved sediment and nutrient processing, RSC focuses on natural process to links ecosystem process with flowing water.
- Jim White, Executive Director, Cuyahoga River Remedial Action Plan, will be presenting on the development of the Cuyahoga Habitat Underwater Basket (CHUB) which are "mini-habitats" mounted to the corrugated steel bulkheads lining the Cuyahoga River.
- Warren Yerex, Supervisor of Aquatic Resources, Grand River Conservation Authority will be speaking about the heavily urbanized Grand R. (ON) watershed and Lake Erie's eastern basin nearshore that have historically been assessed and managed largely independent of each other. His talk will describe recent multi-jurisdictional collaborative efforts by provincial, federal, and local agencies and groups to characterize the strong connectivity between these environments and further, to use this knowledge to guide restoration planning and implementation.

3. Wetland/Plant Communities

LaSalle 3 – 7th floor

Facilitator: Joel Weiner, Senior Advisor, International Joint Commission

Rapporteur: Marc Gaden, Communications Director and Legislative Liaison, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Several panelists in this session will focus on challenges of integrating human and natural processes into wetland restoration efforts. In addition, the unique challenges of managing the highly diverse landscapes within wetland areas in an urban setting will be discussed.

- Dr. Greg Smith, Center Director, USGS National Wetlands Research Center will discuss wetlands and urban environments and the challenges of integrating the natural and human landscapes using New Orleans and the impacts of Hurricane Katrina as a case study.
- Dr. Doug Wilcox, Empire Innovation Professor of Wetland Science, SUNY - Brockport will be presenting on strategies required for restoring Great Lakes wetlands in urban areas where

natural processes have been altered by human activities; he will illustrate options available with examples from several locations

- Zhanna Yermakov, Natural Areas Manager, Chicago Park District will talk about the success of the natural areas along the Chicago shoreline and how the district plans to transform 10 acres of barren beach sand at one of their swimming beaches into an ecologically rich habitat.
- Jennifer Bowman, Restoration Ecologist, Royal Botanical Gardens, Hamilton ON will be presenting on the successes and challenges of restoring the Cootes Paradise Marsh, at the western tip of Lake Ontario. Focus will be placed on explaining how the Fishway structure has been instrumental in the recovery process.
- Paul Labus, Northwest Indiana Region Director, The Nature Conservancy, will be presenting on conservation issues associated with managing high diversity natural area fragments in the urban/industrial landscape of northwest Indiana.

4. Planning/Implementation

Adams Ballroom – 6th floor

Facilitator: Dale Burkett, Sea Lamprey Operations Director, Great Lakes Fishery Commission

Rapporteur: Joel Brammeier, Vice President of Policy, Alliance for the Great Lakes

This session will begin with presentations from restoration project designers/managers that will speak to how funding, bureaucratic and monitoring constraints affect project design, timeline and scale.

Following, representatives from funding organizations will speak to how their agencies evaluate projects and predict ecological success from project design.

- Frank Veraldi, Ichthyologist/Restoration Ecologist, US Army Corps of Engineers, will be presenting on the ecological aspects of restoring a small site on the Chicago River North Branch. Based on his work, he will be discussing how ecological restoration can be implemented in an urban setting.
- Gildo Tori, Ducks Unlimited's Director of Public Policy, will be presenting factors necessary for a successful on-the-ground wetland restoration in altered environments, based on the 71-year history of DU's mission of wetlands conservation. Gildo will be sharing real life examples of successes as well as obstacles to avoid.
- Rob Rejman, Director of Capital Construction for the Chicago Park District, will present an overview of the Morgan Shoal project. The project is located in an area of Lake Michigan where

the bedrock of Silurian (Niobrara/Niagara) dolomite bedrock comes up to the surface, and of "pebble beach", a major launch point for deep water swimmers. Yet the shore comes close Lake Shore Drive in the south part. Sheet pile cannot be driven because the bedrock is too close to the surface.

- Brenda Axon, Manager, Watershed Planning Services, Conservation Halton. As part of the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan, fish and wildlife habitat has been restored at a number of locations within the harbour, Cootes Paradise and adjacent watersheds. Ms. Axon's presentation will examine lessons learned while planning and implementing these initiatives.
- Todd Hogrefe, Assistant Director, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation Central Partnership Office, will discuss the issue of funding for urban habitat work along the Great Lakes. He will describe some of the challenges and offer recommendations from the perspective of a non-profit foundation.

2:45 – 3:00 pm

BREAK

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Facilitated discussion (held in concurrent breakout sessions)

Return to breakout room

1. Based on the presentations you heard from our panelists today, and based on your own experience, what are **the elements** of, and **specific tools** for, successful urban habitat restoration initiatives? What has not worked?
2. Based on the presentations you heard from our panelists today, and based on your own experience, what **major obstacles** can prevent urban habitat restoration? How can these major obstacles be overcome?
3. What can we specifically do to improve communications among those carrying out restoration in urban areas to help them **exchange information, identify emerging issues, and share best practices**?
4. What **broad lessons** have we learned from the urban habitat restoration initiatives presented today? How can we translate those lessons into **policy guidelines and directives**?

5:30 – 6:00 pm

Trolleys depart for John G. Shedd Reception

Wabash Street entrance

6:00 – 9:00 pm

John G. Shedd Reception

Aquarium's Caribbean Reef Rotunda – Group entrance

- Dave Ullrich, Executive Director, Great Lakes/St. Lawrence Cities Initiative

- Debra Kerr, Executive Vice President, John G. Shedd Aquarium
- Georges Rioux, Consul General, Canadian Consulate - Chicago

8:30 – 9:15 pm **Trolleys depart for the Palmer House Hilton**

January 23, 2008

8:30 – 8:40 am **Welcome**
Adams ballroom – 6th Floor
Cameron Davis, President & CEO, Alliance for the Great Lakes

8:40 – 10:00 am **Report from breakout sessions**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
Facilitator: Mike Donahue, Corporate Vice President of Water Resources and Environmental Services, URS Corporation

- Breakout facilitators sessions to report

10:00 – 11:00 am **Synthesis of recommendations**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
Facilitator: Mike Donahue

11:00 – 11:25 am **Continuation of Synthesis of Recommendations**
Adams Ballroom – 6th floor
Facilitator: Mike Donahue

11:20am – 11:30 pm **Conference Conclusion**
Adams Ballroom – 6th Floor
Brendan Daley, Executive Assistant for Green Initiatives, Chicago Park District