



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

**Allison Fore**

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

[allison.fore@mwrdd.org](mailto:allison.fore@mwrdd.org)

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

November 18, 2022

## Josina Morita departs MWRD Board of Commissioners for Cook County Board

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) Commissioner Josina Morita is departing the MWRD Board of Commissioners for another high-profile position as she was recently elected to serve as Cook County Commissioner of the 13th District. The MWRD Board meeting on November 17 was her last.

During her tenure at the MWRD, Commissioner Morita focused on making the agency become more inclusive. She led the celebration of Asian and Pacific Islander American Heritage Month to express support of the Asian American community and honor Asian American elected officials.

Commissioner Morita also worked to educate students throughout the county about the MWRD. She distributed "Where Does IT Go?" storybooks and links to the animation in both English and Chinese regarding the wastewater treatment process and careers in water. She also worked to restore the urban canopy by distributing countless numbers of MWRD oak saplings.

Commissioner Morita has received numerous accolades. In 2007, the Community Renewal Society named Commissioner Morita one of Chicago's "35 Under 35," fighting racism and poverty. In 2012, she was elected as a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. The same year, she was selected as a Jim Edgar Fellow and a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow. In 2013, she received the Emerging Leader Award from the Illinois Campaign for Political Reform and the Breaking Barriers Award from the Chicago Foundation for Women. Commissioner Morita's human rights and social justice work has been recognized by the Rainbow PUSH Coalition and the Japanese American Citizens League.



She has also been active in numerous organizations. She chairs the Asian American Caucus which was formed in 2019 to advocate for resources and representation for Asian Americans in Illinois. She is director of the United Congress of Community and Religious Organizations, a multiethnic alliance of community organizations working together across 30 communities in Cook County. She serves on the State of Illinois' Racial Profiling and Data Oversight Board, the Asian American Employment Plan Council and the city of Chicago's Commission on Equity. She also presides on the boards of the Woods Fund of Chicago and the Asian American Action Fund of Greater Chicago.

Commissioner Morita will be the first Asian American woman to serve on the county board. *(continued)*

## Josina Morita departs MWRD Board of Commissioners, *cont.*



*Commissioner Josina Morita fishing in the Chicago River in 2017.*



*Commissioner Josina Morita spearheaded the inaugural "Big Jump" with Friends of the Chicago River in 2018.*

“Commissioner Morita has been a passionate, enthusiastic member on the Board of Commissioners,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “We will miss her insight on policy decisions but look forward to working with her in her role as the 13th District Cook County Commissioner.”

“Thank you to residents all across Cook County who elected me to this critical position of service



*Commissioner Josina Morita with USEPA Region V Administrator and former MWRD Commissioner Debra Shore (L) at an O'Brien Water Reclamation Plant Open House in 2019.*



*Commissioner Josina Morita discussing the improved quality of the Chicago River during a panel.*

and my fellow commissioners and MWRD staff for their partnership on a fulfilling six years in office,” said Commissioner Morita. “Whether we were jumping in the River, promoting Asian carp delicacies or driving new policy to shape this agency, I have appreciated my time working to protect our water environment.”

### ***Recovering Resources, Transforming Water***

*Established in 1889, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. Learn more at [mwrld.org](http://mwrld.org).*