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Contact:

Todd Hogrefe, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
612-564-7286

Chi-Cal Rivers Fund Announces \$1.4 Million in Grants

Public-private partnership funds five projects to improve stormwater management, habitat, and green space in Chicago/Calumet region

NOVEMBER 16, 2015, CHICAGO, Illinois – Today, *Chi-Cal Rivers Fund* partners announced six projects selected to receive \$1.4 million in grant funding that will help improve and enhance waterways in the Chicago and Calumet region. With a focus on reducing stormwater runoff, enhancing fish and wildlife habitat, and improving public-use opportunities, this investment will support community-driven projects that benefit the people and wildlife of the region. Grant recipients will match the new grant funding with an additional \$4.4 million for a total on-the-ground impact of \$5.8 million.

Administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the Fund is a partnership among ArcelorMittal, The Chicago Community Trust, Crown Family Philanthropies, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Joyce Foundation, Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, and the Wrigley Company Foundation. The partnership began in 2013, and the \$1.4 million announced today marks the Fund’s third annual set of grants.

“As the world’s leading steel company, strengthened by our Chicago roots, ArcelorMittal is committed to the conserving our shared natural environment so that we may serve the multitude of needs required by all of its stakeholders,” said Bill Steers, General Manager of Corporate Responsibility and Communications at ArcelorMittal. “In serving this need, The Chi-Cal Rivers Fund is great example of a public private partnership initiative that brings a comprehensive consortium of partners together to address the many opportunities found in the Chicago Area Water Ways System for greater collective impact.”

"The Chi-Cal Rivers Fund will fund both green infrastructure and habitat improvement in the District’s service area and make lasting contributions to the water environment," said MWRD President Mariyana Spyropoulos. "The District is proud to partner on this very worthwhile effort."

The six grants announced today will help improve stormwater management in Chicago, enhance public park space and improve access to the area's waterways in Northwest Indiana, enhance prairie and wetland habitat along the Calumet River, and improve fish habitat in the Chicago River. Collectively, the funded projects will:

- add more than 508,000 gallons of stormwater storage capacity
- improve 5 acres of public park space
- restore and enhance 566 acres of wetland and upland habitat
- improve approximately 2,640 feet of in-stream habitat

"The grants announced today demonstrate how actions to restore local rivers work in concert with efforts to enhance local communities," said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. "These novel projects represent the extraordinary commitments of the Chicago and Calumet regions to restoring their local waterways and surrounding habitats."

The Friends of the Chicago River (Friends), in partnership with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) will use a \$105,003 grant to install native emergent vegetation in the North Shore Channel and the North Branch of the Chicago River as habitat for fish and other aquatic species. The project involves the planting of 2,500 water willow and 2,000 lizard's tail at river locations between Wilmette Harbor and Goose Island. This work will create stands of high-quality habitat for aquatic organisms, protect the shoreline from bank erosion, create shelter for aquatic life during floods, and improve the aesthetics of the channel for recreational users. The selected plant species are particularly appropriate for the unique conditions of the Chicago River and will complement other recent efforts by IDNR and Friends to install 400 channel catfish nesting cavities in the Chicago River system.

The National Audubon Society will receive a \$273,347 grant to enhance habitat for wetland-dependent species and improve public-use for surrounding communities at Indian Ridge Marsh and Big Marsh in the Calumet region. Project outcomes include the establishment of native marsh vegetation on 110 acres and improved and increased public access to two large public areas in the Southside of Chicago. The removal of invasive plant species and the revegetation of a complex mosaic of wet meadow, marsh, and submerged vegetation will improve conditions for dozens of imperiled and declining species in the region and provide flood protection, sediment control, and nutrient trapping. Additionally, informational and educational signage will promote access and providing information on the river and marsh systems in the Calumet region.

Chicago Public Schools will receive a \$300,000 grant for continuing efforts under the Space to Grow program to transform Chicago schoolyards into vibrant outdoor spaces that benefit students, community members, and the environment. Schoolyard renovations supported by the grant will incorporate green infrastructure features, such as vegetated swales, rain gardens, permeable surfacing, and underground water storage. Altogether, these features will capture significant rainfall, helping to keep the City's water resources clean and resulting in less neighborhood flooding. The schoolyards will capture and store stormwater for a combined storage capacity of approximately 500,000 gallons and prevent approximately 320,000 gallons of stormwater from entering Chicago's combined sewer system

each year. The renovated schoolyards will also expand recreational opportunities by providing five acres of new park space for underserved communities.

Friends of the Forest Preserves will use a \$270,000 grant to expand and continue the Centennial Volunteers Network, an organized system of volunteers that restore and monitor habitat along the North Branch of the Chicago River and the Little Calumet River. Grant funding will be used to organize volunteer days throughout the year to conduct habitat restoration activities on 267 acres at nine sites managed by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. The project will reduce invasive vegetation and increase native plant cover throughout riparian areas and adjacent habitat. Reduction of invasive species and improved diversity of native species will improve habitat connectivity and complexity, reduce erosion, and improve water quality, which will benefit native wildlife and plant species. Grant funding will also help ensure the long-term care and enhancement of these sites by building an invested and trained constituency that will continue restoration efforts into the future.

Faith in Place will receive a \$250,689 grant to improve stormwater management systems at five houses of worship on the south side of Chicago. The project will perform a stormwater audit, develop a stormwater management plan, and implement at least one green infrastructure feature at each site. The project will also develop outreach and education plans to encourage more effective water management on properties surrounding the faith communities. The implementation of these activities will improve stormwater management, create demonstrations of green stormwater infrastructure elements throughout the communities, and prevent 43,000 gallons of stormwater from entering area waterways each year. It will also lead to a better understanding of stormwater management among local communities.

Save the Dunes Conservation Fund will receive \$205,959 in grant funding to increase and enhance public-use and riparian habitat on four properties along the Little Calumet River in Northwest Indiana. New canoe and kayak launch sites will be constructed at three properties and 1.7 miles of interpretive trails will be created at two sites. The project will also install new pervious surface parking lots at two sites, which will reduce the amount of stormwater runoff entering the river while providing access to the boat launch sites and hiking trails. Finally, the project will enhance 189 acres of riparian habitat on three of the properties through control of invasive plants, prescribed burning, and replanting areas with native species. Expected project outcomes include increased visitation and usage of local parks, natural areas and waterways, as well as improved habitat for many fish birds and other wildlife.

Chi-Cal Rivers Fund partners plan to announce the next Request for Proposals in June 2016. For more information, please visit www.nfwf.org/chi-cal.

About *Chi-Cal Rivers Fund* Partner Organizations

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's wildlife and habitats. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. NFWF works with

government, nonprofit and corporate partners to find solutions for the most intractable conservation challenges. Over the last three decades, NFWF has funded more than 4,000 organizations and committed more than \$2.9 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at www.nfwf.org.

ArcelorMittal

ArcelorMittal is the world's leading steel and mining company, with a presence in 60 countries and an industrial footprint in 19 countries. Guided by a philosophy to produce safe, sustainable steel, we are the leading supplier of quality steel in the major global steel markets including automotive, construction, household appliances and packaging, with world-class research and development and outstanding distribution networks.

Through our core values of sustainability, quality and leadership, we operate responsibly with respect to the health, safety and wellbeing of our employees, contractors and the communities in which we operate.

For us, steel is the fabric of life, as it is at the heart of the modern world from railways to cars and washing machines. We are actively researching and producing steel-based technologies and solutions that make many of the products and components people use in their everyday lives more energy efficient.

We are one of the world's five largest producers of iron ore and metallurgical coal and our mining business is an essential part of our growth strategy. With a geographically diversified portfolio of iron ore and coal assets, we are strategically positioned to serve our network of steel plants and the external global market. While our steel operations are important customers, our supply to the external market is increasing as we grow.

In 2014, ArcelorMittal had revenues of US\$79.3 billion and crude steel production of 93.1 million metric tons, while our iron ore production reached 63.9 million metric tons.

ArcelorMittal is listed on the stock exchanges of New York (MT), Amsterdam (MT), Paris (MT), Luxembourg (MT) and on the Spanish stock exchanges of Barcelona, Bilbao, Madrid and Valencia (MTS). For more information about ArcelorMittal, visit: corporate.arcelormittal.com or usa.arcelormittal.com.

The Chicago Community Trust

For 99 years, The Chicago Community Trust, our region's community foundation, has connected the generosity of donors with community needs by making grants to organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. In 2013, the Trust, together with its donors, granted more than \$160 million to nonprofit organizations: developing new audiences to sustain Chicago's vibrant arts organizations, protecting the human services safety net for those hardest hit by the recession, stemming the devastating effects of foreclosures on our communities, elevating teaching to meet world class standards, and improving conditions for healthy and active lifestyles. The Trust also invests in the Calumet through the Millennium Reserve project, designated by Governor Quinn in 2011. To learn more, please visit the Trust online at www.cct.org.

Crown Family Philanthropies

Crown Family Philanthropies environmental grantmaking supports efforts to value, preserve and restore natural ecosystems through innovative science-based approaches, emphasizing collaborative efforts which deliver measurable results.

The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation

Established in 1952, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation supports land conservation and artistic vitality efforts in the Chicago Region and Lowcountry of South Carolina. The Foundation seeks to foster land conservation through preservation, restoration, and protection of landscape-scale lands. Particular focus areas include the Calumet Region and the Cook County Forest Preserves. See more about the Foundation at www.gddf.org.

Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources manages, conserves and protects Illinois natural, recreational and cultural resources through regulation and stewardship and promotes the education and science of these resources for present and future generations. Agency programs help citizens enhance their property with conservation programs, protect the public from harm, and increase community economic value through grant funding. Agency-supported outdoor recreation initiatives have an annual multi-billion dollar positive economic impact to local communities. For more information, visit www.dnr.illinois.gov.

The Joyce Foundation

The Joyce Foundation supports the development of policies that both improve the quality of life for people in the Great Lakes region and serve as models for the rest of the country. The foundation focuses on today's most pressing problems while also informing the public policy decisions critical to creating opportunity and achieving long-term solutions. The work is based on sound research and is focused on where the foundation can add the most value. The Joyce Foundation encourages innovative and collaborative approaches with a regional focus and the potential for a national reach. Learn more at www.joycefdn.org.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD)

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwrdd.org) is an award-winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois. The MWRD protects the health and safety of the public in its service area, protects the quality of the water supply source (Lake Michigan), improves and protects the quality of water in watercourses, protects businesses and homes from flood damages, and manages water as a vital resource. The MWRD's service area is 883.5 square miles of Cook County, Illinois. The MWRD is committed to achieving the highest standards of excellence in fulfilling its mission.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is to work with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific

excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

U.S. Forest Service

Established in 1905, the U.S. Forest Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Forest Service's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands managed by the Forest Service contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those lands also provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, valued at approximately \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres in the U.S. including 100 million acres in urban areas where most Americans live. For more information, visit www.fs.fed.us.

The Wrigley Company Foundation

The mission of the Wrigley Company Foundation is to help improve the health of people and our planet through sustainable initiatives, including those focused on environmental stewardship, as well as local needs that ensure a healthy community. Since its founding in 1987, the Wrigley Company Foundation has donated more than \$65 million USD to charitable organizations improving lives around the world. For more information, visit www.wrigley.com and www.mars.com.