



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

# Press Release

**Allison Fore**

Public and Intergovernmental Affairs Officer

312.751.6626

allison.fore@mwr.org

100 East Erie Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

For immediate release

October 22, 2019

## State of Water exhibit at the Field Museum promotes the most valuable resource and the work of the MWRD



*From L to R: Field Museum State of Water Program Manager Rachel Hill, MWRD Commissioner Kim Du Buclet, Field Museum Sustainability Officer Carter O'Brien and Dr. Katherine Moore Powell, a climate change ecologist at the Field Museum paused during the MWRD Board of Commissioner's meeting on Oct. 17 to commemorate the new Field Museum exhibit "State of Water: Our Most Valuable Resource."*

A photography exhibit at the Field Museum focuses its lens on the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and offers a new vantage point into the important work to protect water resources.

To commemorate the Field Museum's focus on water, the MWRD Board of Commissioners recognized Field Museum staff and local photographer Brad Temkin with a resolution for documenting water and the critical infrastructure designed to protect it, including several images Temkin captured at MWRD facilities.

The exhibit, entitled "State of Water: Our Most Valuable Resource," presents Temkin's images that center on the design and architecture that drives the water systems on which the world relies.

"We thank the Field Museum and photographer Brad Temkin for dedicating their time and resources to shine a light on water and the work we at the MWRD and other utilities do



*The MWRD Board of Commissioners highlighted the work of the Field Museum and photographer Brad Temkin to document the state of water in a new exhibit on display through Jan. 12, 2020.*

to protect this prized resource," said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. "We encourage Chicago area residents to make a visit to the Field Museum through January to learn more about their water environment."

The exhibition features 31 photographs from Temkin, a native Chicagoan and award-winning photographer, who over the last several years navigated his way through MWRD's tunnels, getting his boots wet in water reclamation plants, reservoirs, pumping stations, drying beds and lagoons to document the work of the MWRD, while telling similar stories at utilities across the country, en route to becoming a Guggenheim fellow in 2017.

"These pictures address the importance of water and celebrate ideas in design, showing the inventiveness in infrastructure and architecture that no one ever thinks about, supporting our need for accommodating nature," Temkin said.

Many of the images on display are taken from Temkin's book, "The State of Water," published by Radius Books. Temkin travelled to many places that provide monumental work to keep water flowing and life moving. Field (*continued*)

## State of Water exhibit at the Field Museum promotes resource, *cont.*

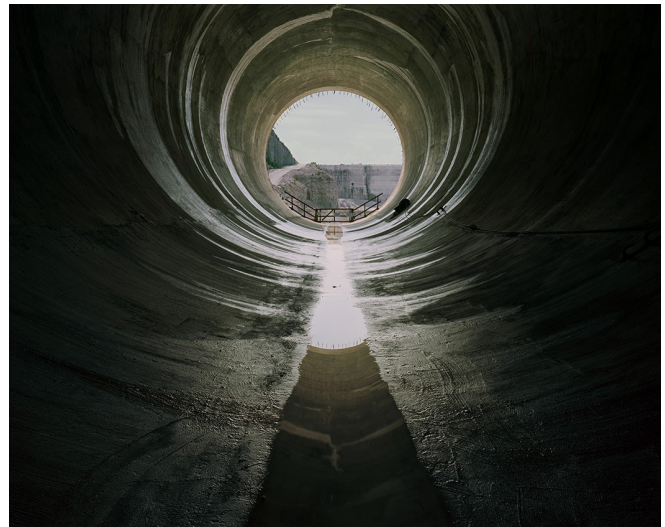


*Photographer Brad Temkin looks into his camera to document MWRD facilities under rain and shine. His work capturing MWRD facilities is now on display at the Field Museum.*

Museum officials said the exhibit causes visitors to think beyond the convenience of readily available water and consider the many processes and engineering innovations required to keep water clean.

“People think very one-dimensionally when it comes to water,” says Dr. Katherine Moore Powell, a climate change ecologist at the Field Museum. “We can struggle to look for a real-world picture to understand these complicated ideas. For instance, at the MWRD, water is purified at a rate of one million gallons per minute. That’s incredible! How are people supposed to appreciate what that even looks like, without seeing it first? We have a lot of daily interactions with water, but most people know so little about the full cycle.”

Dr. Moore Powell, along with Field Museum Sustainability Officer Carter O’Brien and State of Water Program Manag-



*“West Bull Nose” is the end of the MWRD’s Mainstream Tunnel reaching the opening of the McCook Reservoir Stage I. The photograph, taken by Brad Temkin, is one of many local images on display at the Field Museum’s “State of Water” exhibit.*

er Rachel Hill, were honored at the MWRD Board of Commissioner’s meeting on Oct. 17. The resolution was presented by MWRD Commissioner Kim Du Buclet.

“This is an impressive exhibit and contribution toward highlighting the work it takes to protect our water resources,” said Commissioner Du Buclet. “Few people have entered a tunnel or sewer or even wanted to, but this important exhibit takes us all below our sidewalks and into the pipes, tanks and equipment that manage water, and informs us of the importance of this work keeping our water clean and accessible at our faucets and in our environment.”

###

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

*Established in 1889, the MWRD ([www.mwrld.org](http://www.mwrld.org)) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.*