

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN CHICAGOLAND

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Social Justice
1448 E. 52nd St., Box 144, Chicago, IL 60615*

Here are some suggestions for getting involved, to help preserve our natural heritage in the Chicago area, while enjoying the beautiful out of doors.

Illinois EcoWatch is a program, coordinated by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, through which volunteers are trained as Citizen Scientists to help monitor the state's streams, prairies, forests, wetlands and other systems. The consistent, high- quality data collected is valuable to scientists who measure how ecosystems are changing over time. RiverWatch volunteers are trained how to monitor a small section of a stream in order to identify long term trends in stream health. Stream monitoring is done once a year during May or June. PrairieWatch volunteers are trained to survey plants and butterflies at a specific prairie site during the summer monitoring season every other year. ForestWatch volunteers are trained to monitor a specific forest site in the fall and spring every other year. UrbanWatch volunteers are trained to conduct biological inventories of urban green spaces which can be used by scientists to identify long term changes.

To get involved in Illinois EcoWatch, contact:

Illinois EcoWatch Network
Oakton Community College-Div. 1
1600 E. Golf Rd., Rm 2829
DesPlaines, IL 60016
Tel: 847-635-6450 Fax: 847-635-1987
<http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/inrin/ecowatch>

Chicago Wilderness consists of protected natural areas in the Chicago region which harbor rare native plant and animal communities. Calling Frog Survey. Amphibians are considered to be good indicators of environmental quality. To assist scientists in monitoring the distribution of local frog and toad species, volunteers are trained at a three hour session to identify them by their calls. During the spring, volunteers go out three evenings to listen for and document the species heard and then report the findings. For information on monitoring frogs and toads in 2002, contact the Habitat Project at www.habitatproject.org

Habitat Restoration Projects take place year round in the local forest preserves for which volunteers are needed and welcome. Seed collecting and spreading, and removing invasive weeds and brush are some of the activities. For information about workdays, call the county contact person:

Cook Co. Wayne Vanderploeg 630-257-6270
DuPage Co. Cindy Hedges, Vol.Coar. 630-876-5929
Kane Co. Volunteer Coordinator 847-741-9798
Kendall Co. Jason Pettit, Director 630-553-4131
Lake Co. Ken Klick, Ecologist 847-968-3284
McHenry Co. Mary Keith, Vol. Coor. 815-338-6223
Will Co. Dave Mauger, Nt.Res.Mgt 815-727-8700