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Contact:

Rob Blumenthal, (202) 857-0166, rob.blumenthal@nfwf.org

Chi-Cal Rivers Fund Announces \$960,000 in Grants

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

CHICAGO, IL (November 13, 2017) – [Chi-Cal Rivers Fund](#) partners today announced five projects selected to receive \$960,000 in grant funding to improve and enhance waterways in the Chicago-Calumet region. These community-driven investments will enhance fish and wildlife habitat, reduce stormwater runoff and improve public-use opportunities. The grants will generate \$1.46 million in matching contributions, for a total conservation impact of \$2.42 million.

Administered by the [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#) (NFWF), the fund is supported in 2017 with contributions from ArcelorMittal, BNSF Railway, The Chicago Community Trust, The Crown Family, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service. The grants announced today mark the fund's fifth annual slate of grants, bringing its total cumulative impact to \$18.23 million.

“The Chi-Cal Rivers Fund demonstrates how public-private partnerships can uniquely accelerate the restoration and revitalization of habitats, waterways and communities through collaborative investment and strategic alignment,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “The awards announced today represent the fund's fifth year of conservation investments throughout the Chicago-Calumet region, which have led to the restoration of more than 1,600 acres of habitat, 4.5 million gallons of additional stormwater capacity and the creation or enhancement of more than 80 acres of public park and neighborhood green space.”

“As the world's leading steel and mining company, we recognize the critical importance of our region's waterways and appreciate the opportunity to work with like-minded partners to revitalize these important assets,” said Bill Steers, general manager of corporate responsibility and communications for ArcelorMittal. “As a founding member of the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, we are proud to leverage our resources, funding and ideas with our partners to advance this effective public-private partnership. Together, we are making progress on important issues such as stormwater infrastructure, habitat restoration and neighborhood green space that address key challenges in the Calumet region.”

The five grants announced today will enhance and restore forest and savanna habitat along the east branch of the Little Calumet River, improve fish passage in Mill Creek for native species, enhance public park space and access to natural areas at Wolf Lake, and increase stormwater storage capacity in the greater Chicago area. Collectively, the funded projects will:

- Restore and enhance 240 acres of savanna, riparian and upland habitat
- Improve 13,200 feet of in-stream habitat
- Create and improve more than 10 acres of neighborhood green space
- Add more than 551,200 square feet of green stormwater infrastructure

“The people of BNSF care about the communities in which we operate,” said Andy Williams, BNSF director of public affairs for Illinois. “The Chicago region is an important part of our rail network, key to moving goods from the West Coast to store shelves in the region. We are proud to support the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund to improve local waterways for the benefit of the residents and wildlife that call Chicagoland home.”

Elizabeth Cisar, senior program officer for the Joyce Foundation’s environment program, said the grants provide multiple benefits to the Chicago region. “Cleaner rivers and accessible waterways that draw residents are important to the Chicago region’s health and vitality,” said Cisar. “As we see more intense rains, flooding problems in our neighborhoods are more frequent and more pollution runs off into our rivers. The Joyce Foundation is pleased to partner with other private and public funders to invest in projects that help reduce urban flooding and improve the health and accessibility of the waterways in the Chicago and Calumet region.”

To learn more about the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund and the five projects announced today, please visit www.nfwf.org/chi-cal.

About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 4,500 organizations and committed more than \$3.8 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at www.nfwf.org.

About 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 more information about ArcelorMittal, visit: corporate.arcelormittal.com/ or www.usa.arcelormittal.com.

About BNSF Railway

BNSF Railway is one of North America's leading freight transportation companies. BNSF operates approximately 32,500 route miles of track in 28 states and also operates in three Canadian provinces. BNSF is one of the top transporters of consumer goods, grain and agricultural products, low-sulfur coal, and industrial goods such as petroleum, chemicals, housing materials, food and beverages. BNSF's shipments help feed, clothe, supply, and power American homes and businesses every day. BNSF and its employees have developed one of the most technologically advanced, and efficient railroads in the industry. We work continuously to improve the value of the safety, service, energy, and environmental benefits we provide to our customers and the communities we serve. You can learn more about BNSF at www.BNSF.com.

About The Chicago Community Trust

The Chicago Community Trust, our region's community foundation, partners with donors to leverage their philanthropy in ways that transform lives and communities. Since our founding in 1915, the Trust has awarded approximately \$2.3 billion in grants to thousands of local and national nonprofits, including \$164.5 million in 2014. Throughout our Centennial year, the Trust will celebrate how philanthropy in all its forms – time, treasure and talent – strengthens our region and impacts the lives of others in countless ways.

About The Crown Family

After more than 60 years of family grantmaking under the name Arie and Ida Crown Memorial, in 2009 Crown Family Philanthropies (CFP) was developed as a vehicle for a variety of family grantmaking. 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.

About The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation

Established in 1952, The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation supports land conservation, artistic vitality, and regional collections for the people of the Chicago region and the Lowcountry of South Carolina. In the Chicago region, the Foundation focuses the majority of its land conservation support in five focus areas, including the Calumet Region and the Cook County Forest Preserves. See more about the Foundation at www.gddf.org.

About The Joyce Foundation

The Joyce Foundation works with grantee partners to improve quality of life, promote community vitality, and achieve a fair society. We focus grant making primarily on the Great Lakes region, and also have national impact through our program areas – Education, Employment, Environment, Gun Violence Prevention, Democracy and Culture. Joyce was established in 1948 in Chicago, and over the years its focus areas have evolved in response to changing social needs. The foundation has assets of \$950 million and distributes approximately

\$48 million annually. For more information, please visit our website www.joycefdn.org or follow us on Twitter @JoyceFdn.

About U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) leads the nation's environmental science, research, education, and assessment efforts. The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. For more information, visit www.epa.gov.

About the 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.

About the U.S. Forest Service

Established in 1905, 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 provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply and contribute more than \$10 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. The agency has a direct or indirect stewardship role in caring for about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres in the U.S. This includes 100 million acres in urban areas where most Americans live. The U.S. Forest Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. For more information, visit www.fs.fed.us.

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