**Website:**

**This earth day, we need to invest in parks, preserves, and planet. It is time to ask our elected official for help!**

Take action with us today to ask our elected officials in IL General Assembly and Chicago who serve shoreline communities to invest in nature-based solutions to erosion and rising water levels in Lake Michigan, and to look at our Last Four Miles plan as a guide for such investment.

**Will you join us in sending a letter to our shoreline elected officials?**

**At the bottom of this page is alist of all officials whose district boarder the lake. You can find your representative or email them all.**

**We need to remind them of the Last Four Miles plan and ask them to invest in nature-based solutions to erosion and rising water levels in Lake Michigan.**

***By sending this letter you are entitled to be an official member of Friends of the Parks. To be added as a member please copy*** [*info@fotp.org*](mailto:info@fotp.org) ***on the email you send, OR email*** [*info@fotp.org*](mailto:info@fotp.org) ***and tell us who you contacted and what date.***

Letter Template:

Dear XXX,

As a constituent from (ZIPCODE), I am writing to ask you to invest in parks, preserves and the planet this Earth Day. You, and all elected officials along Chicago’s shoreline, should **invest funds in nature-based solutions to manage the more extreme water levels of Lake Michigan caused by climate change.**

The effects of climate change are more serious and more damaging than ever. It’s hard not to be anxious about what is happening to our planet. Our own Lake Michigan and the Chicago’s shoreline is increasingly vulnerable. Scientists predict greater extremes in lake water levels, eroding beaches, and increased intensity of storms that will damage buildings, endanger shoreline residents, and destroy concrete revetments like we have seen at Northerly Island and other Chicago parks. High lake levels and fierce wave action bring on enormous expenditures by public agencies, condo associations, individual homeowners, and business. Our city needs action now to help protect our shoreline and combat the worst effects of climate change. You can help invest in parks, preserve and the planet today by taking the following actions:

* **Support the completion Chicago’s entirely public lake front as a nature-based solutions to coastal erosion and raising water levels.** [Friends of the Parks’ *Last Four Miles Plan*](https://www.fotp.org/last-four-miles.html) published in 2009, to celebrate the centennial of Daniel Burnham’s *Plan of Chicago*, the plan lays out the steps to complete an entirely public lakefront, as currently 26 of Chicago’s 30 miles of lakefront have interconnected public parks and paths. This vision was created in partnership with neighborhood community members through two years of meeting, charrettes, and dialogues with the assistance of a professional design team. All the concept plans are nature-based solutions in the form of parks and beaches. This publication is a guide for the best practices the state and city can take to implement nature-based solutions.

**Invest more public funds in nature-based solutions to manage the more extreme water levels instead of just moving floodwaters from vulnerable places to places.** Now is the time for more significant investment because more money is available than in decades, including theBipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act designed $1 billion for restoring the Great Lakes, and The City of Chicago and the Federal government shared funding for a $3 million Lakefront Erosion Study. Not all mitigation measures are created equal. Concrete revetments, metal girders, and other protections simply push higher water to other unprotected places. Nature-based solutions include parkland or beaches that are used and enjoyed by humans and wildlife. Building parks is a cost-effective way to protect lakefront neighborhoods, as the beach, soil, and plantings provide buffering and absorption that help manage fluctuation in lake levels and more frequent and severe storms. These approaches will help us better weather the new realities of climate change.

* **Re-image our shoreline as public space, and not as site for industry or toxic waste.** Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ operates a Confined Disposal Facility- or a toxic dredge dump - on the Southeast Side shoreline. In 1982, The Illinois General Assembly authorized the construction and use of the Chicago Area CDF for ten years. The legislature envisioned that the CDF would be capped and redeveloped as a public park once full. Forty years later and despite opposition by residents of the 10th ward, park advocates, and environmental groups, the US Army Corps in 2022 applied for a new 20-year permit to keep the facility operating. The 10th ward, where the facility is located, is an Environmental Justice community with high levels of both pollution and vulnerability because major highways bisect it, above-average number of landfills, and a high concentration of polluting industries. And it is majority Black and Latinx in population. Higher Lake Michigan water levels and storm surges could penetrate the facility, causing more toxic dredge to leak into the Lake Michigan drinking water. Additionally, the CDF location is a significant link on the south side to complete Daniel Burnham’s vision of a park system spanning the entire Chicago lakefront. This toxic dump site has already been conveyed to the Chicago Park District per the plan for it to be re-imagined and redeveloped as a park for all to enjoy. But the Army Corps seeks to maintain it as a toxic dump at risk of poisoning Lake Michigan's drinking water.

Thank you today for hearing my concern. I hope you will join me in taking action to address climate change and protect Lake Michigan’s shoreline.

Sincerely,

NAME

ZIPCODE

EMAIL

**Elected officials Look Up**

**Email City officials - To find your officials by your address**,

* [enter your address here.](https://www.chicagoelections.gov/en/your-voter-information.html)
* **Ward and precinct will tell you your City Ward which corresponds to Alderpersons.**
* **Then look under district information – State Senate district and Rep in the general assembly – these numbers will tell you the Senator or Representative.**
* **For all state and federal level elects you can enter your address in** [IL board of election website](https://elections.il.gov/ElectionOperations/DistrictLocator/AddressFinder.aspx)**.**

**Chicago Wards** Along Lake Michigan

49—Maria Hadden- [office@49thward.org](mailto:office@49thward.org) 773-338-5796

48 – Harry Osterman-  (773) 784-5277- harry@48thward.org.

46 – James Cappleman- 773-878-4646- ward46@cityofchicago.org

44 – Thomas “Tom” M. Tunney-  773-525-6034

ward44@cityofchicago.org

43 – Michele Smith- 773-348-9500 - yourvoice@ward43.org

42- Brendan Reilly- 312-744-3062  office@ward42chicago.com

2 – Brian Hopkins- (312) 643-2299, [Ward02@cityofchicago.org](mailto:Ward02@cityofchicago.org)

4 -Sophia King- [WARD04@CITYOFCHICAGO.ORG](mailto:WARD04@CITYOFCHICAGO.ORG) , (773) 536-8103

5 – Leslie Hairson- 773-324-5555, (could not find an email)

7 – Gregory Mitchell- 773.731.7777 alderman@gregmitchell7thward.org

10 – Susan Sadlowski- (773) 768 - 8138 ward10@cityofchicago.org﻿

**IL House District Along Lake Michigan**

14 – Kelly Cassidy- [repcassidy@gmail.com](mailto:repcassidy@gmail.com) (773) 784-2002

12 – Margaret Croke- (773) 348-8974 [info@repcroke.com](mailto:info@repcroke.com)

26 – Kambium “Kam” Buckner- (773) 924-1755 [Buckner@illinois26.com](mailto:Buckner@illinois26.com)

25 – Curtis Tarver (773) 363-8870 office@repcurtisjtarverii.com

**IL Senate District Along Lake Michigan**

13 – Robert Peters- (773) 363-1996 info@senatorrobertpeters.com

6 – Sara Feigenholtz- (773) 296-4141- [sara@senatorsara.com](mailto:sara@senatorsara.com)

7 – Mike Simmons -  773-945-9979 senatormikesimmons@gmail.com