



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

100 East Erie Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Legislation Text

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TRANSMITTAL LETTER FOR BOARD MEETING OF FEBRUARY 16, 2017

COMMITTEE ON ENGINEERING

Mr. David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Authorization to negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement with the Chicago Park District for a project to remove the North Branch Dam and stabilize banks along the North Branch Chicago River and the North Shore Channel from Lawrence Avenue to Peterson Avenue (16-IGA-22)

Dear Sir:

Authority is requested to negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with the Chicago Park District (CPD) in support of the United States Corps of Engineers (USACE) River Riparian and Habitat Project (16-IGA-22). Authority to negotiate an Intergovernmental Agreement in the form of a Project Partnership Agreement (PPA) with the USACE and the CPD was granted on September 1, 2016. However, since the PPA is essentially a USACE document and does not provide the detail required to specify the obligations of the CPD and the District as non-federal sponsors, a separate IGA is required.

The entire project consists of restoration of approximately of 1.0 acre of stream bed by removing concrete within the channel, installing riffles and step pools, removal of the North Branch Dam, and providing cobbles, gravels and sands; restoration of 29.2 acres of savannah habitat; streambank stabilization through restoration of 14.2 acres of river bank by gentling riverbank slopes, removing invasive species, and establishing native bank vegetation; and restoration of 5.3 acres of aquatic beds. In all, it entails use of 50 acres, approximately 45 of which are owned by the District. The CPD currently leases much of the property. The new project has already gone out for public comment, and USACE is currently finalizing its feasibility study. The total project cost is estimated at \$15 million. CPD has committed \$2.5 million for local matching funds, and the District has been asked to consider providing the remaining required \$2.5 million local cost share, although much of the project is on District land currently under lease to CPD for a nominal \$10 fee. USACE would provide the remaining \$10 million.

Based upon the availability of Federal funds, USACE plans to start construction in Fiscal Year 2018. Removal of the North Branch Dam is proposed in summer 2018. Because the project entails use of District lands currently under lease to other entities, CPD would be required to obtain the written consents of such entities before entering and using such lands.

Based on the foregoing, the Engineering Department recommends that the District be authorized to negotiate an IGA with the CPD. Authority to enter into the IGA will be sought from the Board of Commissioners at a future date.

Requested, Catherine A. O'Connor, Director of Engineering, WSS:KMF

Recommended, David St. Pierre, Executive Director

Respectfully Submitted, Frank Avila, Chairman Committee on Engineering

Disposition of this agenda item will be documented in the official Regular Board Meeting Minutes of the Board of Commissioners for February 16, 2017

