

PROTECT CONNE COLLABORATE HARNESS REVITALIZE RESTORE PLAN CONSERVE NURTURE PARTN TEACH ENGAGE STRENGTHEN AM

CT ORGANIZE ADVOCATE MOBI

OPENLANDS' VISION for the region is a landscape that includes a vast network of land and water trails, tree-lined streets, and intimate public gardens within easy reach of every resident. It includes parks and preserves big enough to provide natural habitat and give visitors a sense of the vast prairies, woodlands, and wetlands that were here before cities and towns.

We believe that protected and well cared for open space is critical to the quality of life in northeastern Illinois and the surrounding region. By conserving nature for life, we preserve places for people of all backgrounds and beliefs to engage and enjoy the natural world just outside their doors.

EK CATALYZE RETU PLIFY FNJOY



Above: Glacial Park, McHenry County Conservation District, Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge Right: Openlands Lakeshore Preserve, Lake County









HERE, EASTERN FORESTS GRADUALLY BECOME OPEN, PARKLIKE SAVANNAS BEFORE TRANSFORMING COMPLETELY TO PRAIRIE.

Left: Waterfall Glen Forest Preserve, DuPage County **Above:** Deer Grove East Forest Preserve, Cook County

THANK YOU

Dear Friends,

Since 1963, Openlands has measured success by the diverse ways we connect people to nature near where they live—from thousands engaging in the vast open space of Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie to a Birds in my Neighborhood® volunteer leading a class of 4th graders in understanding nature just outside their doors. In 2019, we celebrated strategic accomplishments in protecting priority landscapes, advancing nature-based climate solutions, and building advocates for nature—advancing the legacy of stewardship in our region.

Through our community conservation efforts, we piloted a dynamic new Forestry Training Program. With 100% of the inaugural graduates successfully employed in the conservation field, the program is a burgeoning example of how to create a stronger and more diverse green workforce. We also completed construction on our 20th Space to Grow schoolyard with school staff, students, and neighbors. Space to Grow is a model of what can be achieved when cross-sector partnerships are developed. With a partnership between Openlands and Healthy Schools Campaign, and capital support from the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, City of Chicago, and Chicago Public Schools, we have forged innovative solutions

in stormwater management, and given children healthier and safer places to play.

Our advocacy and landscape preservation work were strengthened by people coming together to protect natural places. In July, a coalition led in partnership by Openlands successfully defeated the proposed Tri-County Tollway. This project would have devastated some of the most important natural areas in Lake and McHenry Counties, with proposed roads impacting Liberty Prairie Reserve, Volo Bog State Natural Area, and Glacial Park—the heart of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge. Instead, our work gave rise to a new comprehensive planning process that will implement sustainable place-based solutions to regional transportation needs.

And in 2019 we increased our efforts to connect people to these vital natural spaces with the launch of the Get Outside Map on Openlands.org. This interactive tool features over 350 places to get outside throughout Chicagoland in a user-friendly format that has exponentially increased Openlands' advocates for nature.

In October, the Openlands Annual Luncheon highlighted the importance of stewardship in our region. As Openlands'

Board Member and keynote speaker Wendy Paulson observed, "The opportunity to participate, learn, and make a difference in natural areas restoration was pioneered in Chicago."

Openlands is humbled to be a part of that legacy, which your support makes possible—thank you. As we enter the next decade, we look forward to establishing new ways to protect open space, make our neighborhoods more verdant and, of course, get outside to enjoy it.

Sincerely,

Carrie C. McNally

CHAIR, BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Camic Monally

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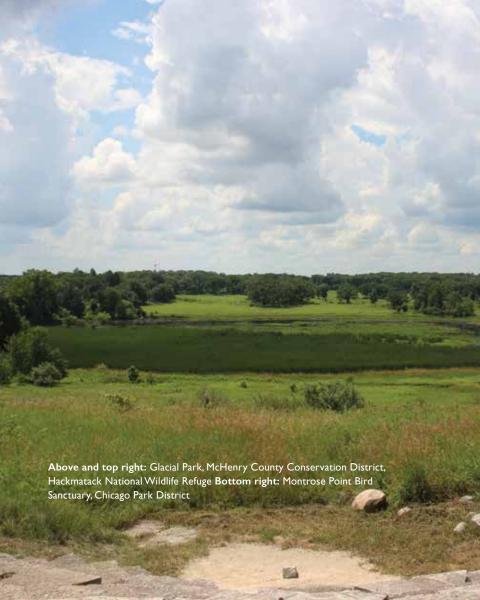


PROTECT

SS TEACH CATALY

LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION is a continuum, from the smallest park in a densely populated neighborhood, to vast acres of wetlands, prairie, or forest. Openlands ensures an interconnected tapestry of healthy land and waterways that connects us to this place. And it extends to our policy work, igniting systemic change to protect what's already been protected, forever. In 2019, we increased land protection and impact. We acquired properties in high-need neighborhoods of Chicago, and hundreds of acres of land with a strong coalition of partners at Hackmatack National Wildilfe Refuge. Through our policy and advocacy work we saved the Liberty Prairie Reserve, Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge, and Volo Bog from a destructive Tri-County toll road, and worked with diverse stakeholders toward a comprehensive land-use plan to further protect the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie.

ENGAGE RETURN











PROTECTING AND RESTORING LARGE-SCALE LANDSCAPES MEANS WORKING WITH PARTNERS ON CREATIVE AND VISIONARY INITIATIVES, LIKE ADVOCATING ONCE AGAIN FOR THE MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE.

Above: President and CEO Jerry Adelmann at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie **Bottom right:** The Thompson Center, advocating for Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie











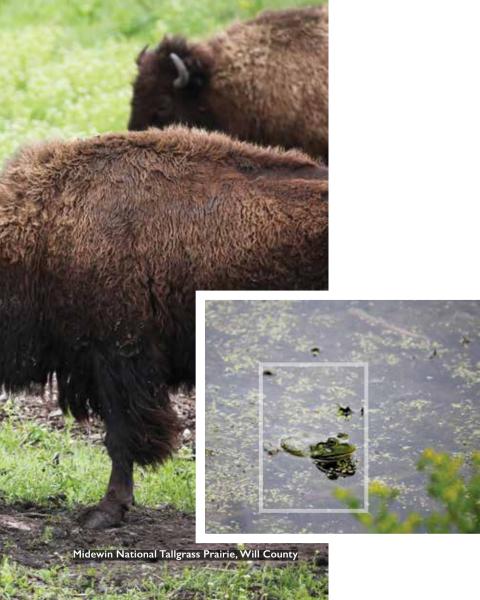
RESTORE

TEACH ENJOY

RESTORATION is an essential component of land protection. The dynamic interaction of weather, plants, and people here have left a legacy of rich soils and pristine streams, muted autumn colors, and endless vistas that make our region both remarkable and complicated. By restoring land to its healthy state, we armor communities against the severe and unpredictable impacts of a warming climate. Throughout 2019, our restoration efforts impacted hundreds of acres, from Wisconsin to the Calumet, from Cook County to Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. We placed nature-based solutions to climate change at the center of our strategic priorities knowing that protected, restored, and healthy lands and waters contribute 37% of the solution to mitigating the impacts of increased temperature and more severe and frequent storms. Openlands worked with a broad spectrum of organizations, coalitions, and partners to advance restorative land practices as a cost-effective and smart solution for climate resiliency.

INSPIRE ADVO











Clockwise from bottom left: sassafras, Birds in my Neighborhood at Indiana Dunes National Park, tamarack pines and lupines at Volo Bog



OUR HOME WELCOMES SPECIES THAT THRIVE TO THE NORTH, LIKE THE TAMARACK, OR TO THE SOUTH, LIKE SASSAFRAS.

THE NATURE OF THE CHICAGO REGION IS AS DIVERSE, SURPRISING, AND VARIED AS THE PEOPLE WHO CALL IT HOME.







IT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO OPENLANDS TO PROTECT THE LARGE
LANDSCAPES OF THE CHICAGO REGION AND TO CONNECT THEM IN
A HEALTHY AND VIBRANT "WEB OF GREEN." THESE INTERCONNECTED
LANDSCAPES ARE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT NOW SINCE THEY WILL—
INDEED ALREADY DO—PROVIDE A SAFE HARBOR FOR SPECIES
CONFRONTED WITH A CHANGING CLIMATE.

Sandhill Crane, Deer Grove East Forest Preserve, Cook County

ENGAGE

ZE COLLABORA

OPENLANDS' WORK engaging communities with nature is as rich as our region's landscapes. With 200 Birds in my Neighborhood volunteers, Openlands revealed the world of birds that are all around us to over 2,000 area children in Chicago, and Lake and McHenry Counties. We transformed five paved schoolyards into vibrant learning landscapes that reduce neighborhood flooding through our partnership with Healthy Schools Campaign for the Space to Grow program. And with the enduring support of dedicated TreeKeepers® and Forestry Trainees, we planted more than 1,000 trees in 2019 and significantly increased the care of existing trees through pruning, watering, and mulching—building a healthy and abundant urban tree canopy that reduces air temperature, filters pollution, and quickly absorbs stormwater.

MOBILIZE ADY ENJOY INNOVA



AN ARMY OF TREEKEEPERS ENSURES A VIBRANT URBAN FOREST THAT CONNECTS TO THE FORESTS AND PRESERVES THAT SURROUND US.













Birds in my Neighborhood volunteers and students at Indiana Dunes National Park and Montrose Point Bird Sanctuary















Space to Grow student volunteers greening Chicago playgrounds

ENJOY

ORGANIZE

FOR EACH OF US, the reason to ensure plentiful and healthy land and water begins with one moment—the moment when you unforgettably connect with nature. This moment is experienced in a million individual ways: children seeing bison for the first time on a field trip to Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, or a couple walking down a newly planted tree-lined street to find the birds have returned to their neighborhood. At Openlands, the drive to protect and care for healthy land and water has never wavered—conserving nature for life. In 2019, we launched the Get Outside Map and introduced thousands of people to a new, free way to get outside and explore places to enjoy nature's metropolis. We invite everyone to join us to find their moment, perhaps for the first time.

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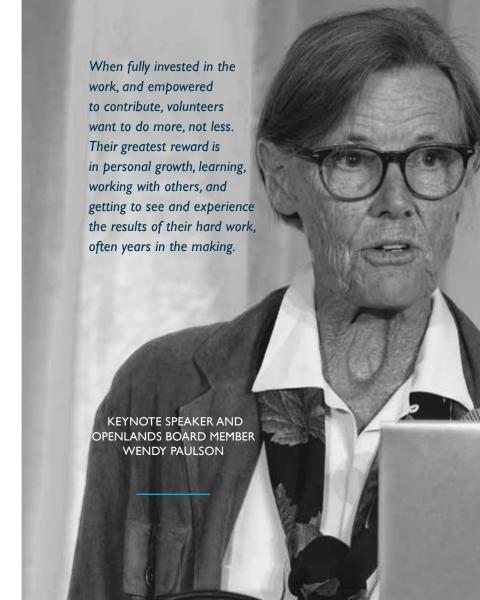












2019 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

REVENUE

REVENSE		
Individuals	\$	1,114,958
Foundations, Corporations, and Organizations	\$	2,967,130
Government		282,042
Program		170,857
Restricted funds for Capital Improvement		1,497,552
Events		372,909
In Kind		26,661
Endowment		202,947
Investment Income		22,795
Total Operating Revenue	\$	6,657,850
EXPENSES		
Program and Supporting Services	\$	2,141,878
Restoration		1,337,030
Staff Salary and Benefits		2,930,681
Total Operating Expenses	\$	6,409,589
Increase in Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	•	249 241
	\$	
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions, Beginning of Year		5,144,926
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions, End of Year		5,393,187
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions		23,905,480
Total Net Assets	\$	29,298,667

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Thank you to our generous funding partners who helped to fulfill Openlands' mission of connecting people to nature over the past year.

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