

Jackson Park: An Ecological Restoration Designed in the Olmsted Style

Section 506 Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Project Update

[rec'd by JPAC March 7 2015]

There is a lot of construction activity occurring in Jackson Park that is associated with the Chicago Park District's Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Project. Below is a brief update on the project.

The project is part of a 5-year capital improvement project to restore habitat within the natural areas of Jackson Park. The Chicago Park District and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are partners in this bio-cultural endeavor that entangles ecosystem restoration and cultural landscapes. The project goals are to preserve, respect, rehabilitate and steward the historic character of the park and restore habitat through improvements to ecosystem connectivity, structure and biological diversity. This project has developed with partners from the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Project 120, and Heritage Landscapes, LLC. These improvements to a park with such rich architectural, historical, cultural and ecological significance is a multi-disciplinary, collaborative process.

The construction work is occurring in phases over 5-years, starting in the area around wooded island. It will include the planting of over 400,000 trees, shrubs, vines, forbs, grasses, sedges, rushes, and ferns planted to form shoreline wetlands, meadows, oak savannas, woodlands, dunes, and sedge lawn communities through the eye of an Olmsted design. The aquatic and terrestrial improvements include the grading and stabilization of approximately 8 acres of lagoon shorelines and the reintroduction of native fish communities. Other improvements include the paving of pathways and overlooks throughout the park and the removal and management of invasive and non-native plants. In the coming months, continued work on the site will include shoreline grading and pathway work with restricted access to Wooded Island during.

More details on the Jackson Park Great Lakes Fishery and Ecosystem Restoration Project can be found at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's website:

<http://www.lrc.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorksProjects/JacksonPark.aspx>

Prior to the start of this project, a series of community and stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the project's goals and approaches, including regular monthly updates at the Jackson Park Advisory Council's meetings.

If you have further questions regarding this project now or into the future, I encourage you to attend the JPAC meetings, which occur on the 2nd Monday of every month at 7pm in the Jackson Park Field House. Please feel free to share this update with others who may be interested in this project.

Thank you,
Lauren Umek