

WEF Community Service Project Request for Proposal



The WEF Community Service Project event aims to make a difference in the WEFTEC® host city by making a positive impact on the local water environment and educating the community about the value of water.

Potential Service Project Host:

The Water Environment Federation's (WEF) Students and Young Professionals Committee (SYPC) is responsible for organizing an annual volunteer service project in conjunction with WEF's annual Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibition and Conference (WEFTEC). The Water Environment Federation is a not-for-profit association that provides technical education and training for thousands of water quality professionals who clean water and return it safely to the environment. WEF members have proudly protected public health, served their local communities, and supported clean water worldwide since 1928. The WEF Community Service Project is an opportunity, with the help of the local utility and environmental organizations, to give back while engaging and educating the community about their water environment. A video of the 2018 service project in New Orleans is available here:

<https://youtu.be/wO494j0OEIQ>.

WEFTEC 2019 will take place at Chicago McCormick Place Convention Center September 21 – September 25 and the WEF Community Service Project will take place on Saturday, September 21. WEF plans to provide the following for construction of the service project:

- Project management
- Landscape architectural services
- 125 +/- volunteers
- 4-6 hours of labor (500 - 750 working hours)
- Transportation, food, and beverages for the volunteers

We are seeking a service project related to the improvement of water quality and/or the environment in Chicago, within a 20 minute drive of Grant Park. Water-related projects include, but are not limited to, rain garden and bio-swale construction, replacement of invasive plants with native species, construction of permeable surfaces to replace impermeable surfaces, flooding mitigation, wetland planting, or other low impact development. Special consideration will be given to projects which have an appropriate scope for the expected volunteer base, projects that might not otherwise happen without providing volunteers and material resources, and show an ability to develop and implement long term or ongoing maintenance plans for the site.

Our local municipal partners, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and the Chicago Department of Water Management, along with other local organizations, provide much of the necessary equipment and site preparations. Through donations and sponsorships we anticipate raising \$10,000 - \$15,000 to purchase materials such as plants, pavers or other project specific items. Additionally, we will be seeking grant funding for this project and anticipate to use a portion of these funds for contract work to complete aspects of the project that require expertise (i.e. landscape design, paver laying, etc.). Our host partner is expected to collaborate with us on project logistics, weigh-in on project design decisions, and commit to maintaining the project.

In conjunction with the water-related service project, we will host Water Palooza, an education fair on

Friday, September 20 at a nearby school or other suitable community location. Water Palooza provides hands-on and demonstrative activities regarding the value of water, wastewater treatment, and sustainable community practices to young students. We collaborate with local agencies or advocacy groups that are able to share their knowledge of local watersheds and ecosystems, demonstrate the importance of protecting water resources, show how water and the environment interact, and further educate children on general water and environmental issues.

The WEF Community Service Project began in 2008 and has been increasingly successful each year. Pictures and descriptions of past projects are included below. Dozens of professionals volunteer their time to plan and execute the project, and the biggest names in the industry have continued to provide sponsorship and financial support. This project brings all aspects of the water industry together toward a common goal: helping the local community and educating the public about the value of water.

If you are interested in proposing a site/project for the 2019 WEF Community Service Project, please email ncook@donohue-associates.com by Monday, December 17 letting us know of your intent to apply.

We will be hosting a webinar/conference call for anyone who has expressed the intent to apply, which will occur in early January.

Full proposals will be due in January including, to the extent possible, the following information:

- Name of organization submitting proposal
- Project description
- Project location
- Photos of the project location
- Description of work to be completed
- Description of severity of the issue that this project will be addressing (flooding areas, invasive plants, etc.)
- Projected cost of materials (if available)
- Status of design and/or project rendering (if begun)
- Potential partners
- Long term project owner and ability to provide maintenance

I appreciate your efforts to provide us this information and look forward to working with you to create a positive environmental impact in Chicago.

Sincerely,

Natalie Cook
2019 WEF Community Service Project Co-Chair
ncook@donohue-associates.com

cc:

Maria Claudia Reed, 2020 WEF Community Service Project Co-Chair

Alvin Pilobello, Students & Young Professionals Committee Chair

Megan Livak, Water Environment Federation Staff Liaison

Past WEF Community Service Projects and Water Palooza Events

2017 – Manierre’s Sustainable Stormwater Project, Chicago, IL



900 square feet of permeable outdoor classroom, 450 square feet of raingarden, 450 square feet of bioswale and over 400 flowers, grasses and shrubs have transformed Manierre’s paved lot into a green space to play and learn, with storage for over 9,000 gallons of water.

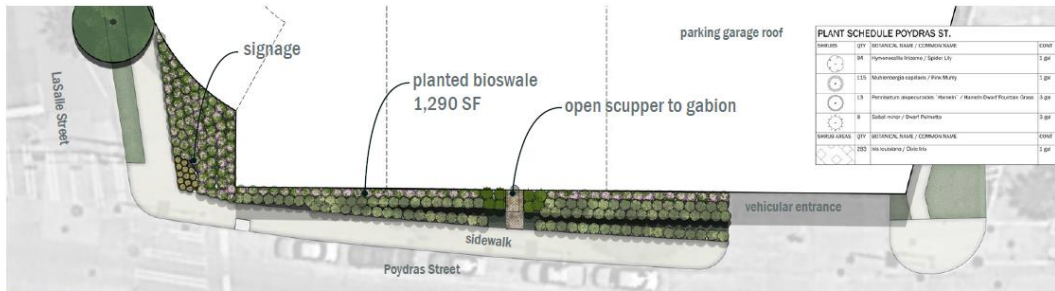


2016 – NOLA Grows Green: The City Hall Stormwater Project
 New Orleans, LA

Proposed Site Improvements:



LaSalle Street

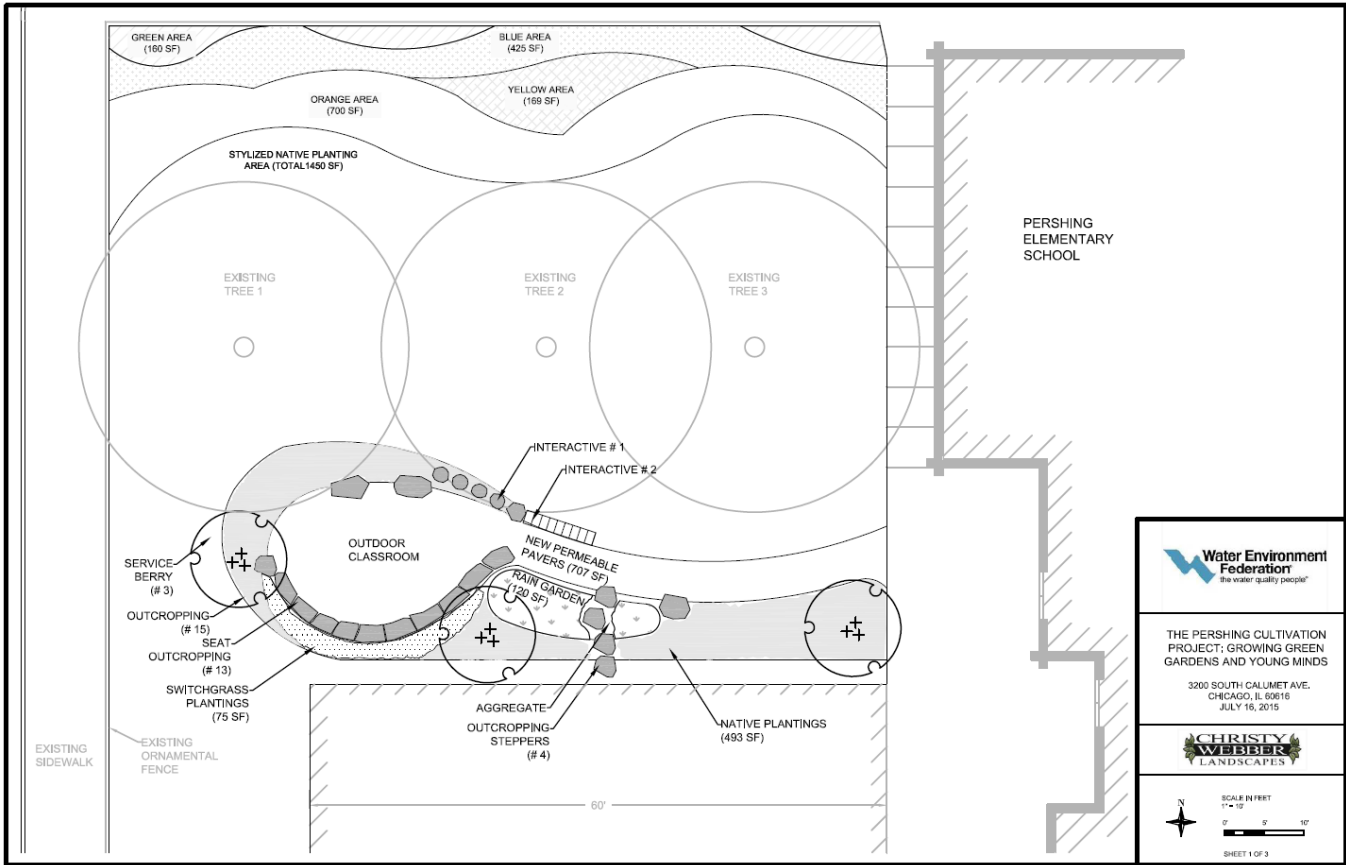


Poydras Street



On the doorsteps of New Orleans City Hall, volunteers from the WEFTEC conference lived out the meaning of [#mywaterlegacy](#). More than one hundred volunteers rose early on a Saturday during WEFTEC to brave 90°F heat in order to complete the 9th annual WEF Community Service Project, *NOLA Grows Green: The City Hall Stormwater Project*. The volunteers were responsible for backfilling a 1,210 square foot bioswale, excavating and backfilling a 180 square foot rain garden, followed by planting both areas, and installing 5 Black Gum trees. The bioswale, located on Poydras St., will capture stormwater from a City Hall parking garage with enough storage for the typical 1 or 2 year storm events.

2015 – The Pershing Cultivation Project: Growing Green Gardens and Young Minds
Chicago, IL



The 8th annual WEF Community Service Project, “The Pershing Cultivation Project: Growing Green Gardens and Young Minds,” transformed a portion of the Pershing East Magnet School grounds into a learning garden that serves as an interactive tool for the school’s K-8 students to learn about water, the environment, and green infrastructure. Teachers were provided with lesson plans to accompany the learning garden, which also houses a learning element. This learning element demonstrates how water infiltrates through different surfaces such as a rain garden, sidewalk, and lawns. WEF also hosted the 3rd annual Water Ploozza education fair on the Friday before the service project to engage Pershing East Magnet School students, teachers, and the community with a variety of hands-on and demonstrative environmental activities to share with students the value of water and help them become stewards of their own water environment.

2014 – Recharge, Restore, Revitalize Hollygrove New Orleans, LA



The 2014 WEF Community Service Project brought together more than 100 volunteers at Conrad Park in the Hollygrove neighborhood of New Orleans to install bioswales, a rain garden and a permeable path totaling 2,600 sq.ft. The volunteers worked tirelessly for 6 hours placing gravel and soil, grading the landscape and planting native vegetation. Thursday and Friday before the WEF Community Service Project, WEF and the Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans brought a green infrastructure educational speaker to Bethune Elementary and held the Water Palooza education fair at Lusher Elementary. Students at Lusher Elementary participated in hands-on activities including an enviroscape demonstrating the flow of water in our cities, a bean bag toss and discussion of what should not be flushed down the toilet, and a photo booth where they dressed up in the garb of various water professions, such as operators, engineers or executives.

2013 – Reading, Writing and Rain Gardens Chicago, IL



The 2013 WEF Community Service Project gathered more than 100 volunteers together at Haines Elementary in Chicago's Chinatown neighborhood to replace concrete with a rain garden on the playground. The volunteers managed the amazing feat of installing a 1000 sq. ft. rain garden—media, soil, plants, and trees—in only 6 hours without major equipment. The day before WEF held the 1st annual Water Palooza education event to teach the kids and teachers about rain gardens, water conservation, and the link between water and public health.

2012 – Bogging in the Big Easy

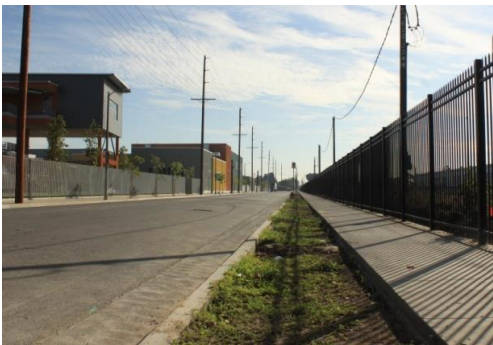
New Orleans, LA



The 2012 WEF Community Service Project involved nearly 100 volunteers planting 5,000 grasses and other bioswale plants in the rain and mud at City Park, New Orleans. The City Park leadership said that this bioswale project may not have been completed had it not been for the support of the WEF volunteers that muddy Saturday morning.

2011 – Walkway to Wetlands

Los Angeles, CA



For the fourth annual WEF Community Service Project, volunteers planted trees at the entrance of recently constructed City of Los Angeles wetlands.

2010 – Bioswales in the Bayou

New Orleans, LA



In 2010, we constructed a bioswale in the Lower Ninth Ward of New Orleans for the WEF Community Service Project. This project also included a community outreach event near the service project site where elementary students were invited to participate in hands-on activities from various water and environmental groups.

2009 – Wading for Wetlands

Orlando, FL



The second annual WEF Community Service Project was a wetland construction in Orlando on the local wastewater utility's land. The wetland had lost its vegetation and by replanting it we reinvigorated the functionality of the wetland cell.

2008 – Getting Out of the Gutter

Chicago, IL



In 2008, the first WEF Community Service Project was undertaken in Chicago with the construction of a rain garden at a city park. WEF volunteers worked with Center for Neighborhood Technology to organize this event, and the local WEF Member Association completes maintenance on the space twice a year.