

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-1304

December 12, 2017

Scott Pruitt  
Director  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Doug Lamont  
Acting Assistant Secretary of the  
Army for Civil Works  
108 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-0108

Dear Administrator Pruitt and Acting Assistant Secretary Lamont:

I write to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to move forward with the restoration of the South Fork of the South Branch of the Chicago River (known as 'Bubbly Creek') in the most expedited manner possible.

A major obstacle to the revitalization of the Bubbly Creek was removed when the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) completed its evaluation of the Creek and removed the site from its Superfund program. The Corps has spent several years studying the restoration of Bubbly Creek, has dedicated funding to the project, and should now be free to complete the final action necessary before Congress authorizes the start of the restoration project.

Bubbly Creek was contaminated years ago by the nearby stockyards, but a more immediate contamination is another reason why a full restoration of the site needs to begin now. In October, an oil spill near Bubbly Creek killed and injured wildlife along a 1.5-mile section of the waterway. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and EPA have completed their clean-up activities and restoration work can now begin.

Historical contamination and recent environmental incidents should bring urgency to the Army Corps expediting the remaining bureaucratic steps to start the environmental restoration of the area. Congress authorized the Army Corps to study this area over a decade ago, and the restoration project resulting from that work has the strong support of the City of Chicago, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District, and the surrounding community.

The Army Corps restoration project will provide much-needed revitalization to an area with a history of industrial pollution. It will also help move our region closer to the vision articulated by local leaders to bring our community rivers that are inviting, productive and living.

I encourage you to work together to see that the Corps restoration can begin as soon as possible by finalizing the Chief's Report and submitting it to Congress for authorization and funding.

Please give this request your immediate attention and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dick Durbin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator