The Chicago River

Transformed, Exploited, and Abused – but Still Alive

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My River

The Des Plaines River in downtown Joliet, IL (2011)

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Chicago's River

Upper North Branch of the Chicago River (Oct. 2012)

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Bridged

North Branch of the Chicago River (Spring 2010)

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Befouled

A chicken standing upon Bubbly Creek, c.1911 (Chicago Historical Society)

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Industrialized

The Morton Salt Plant, North Branch of the Chicago River (Oct. 2011)

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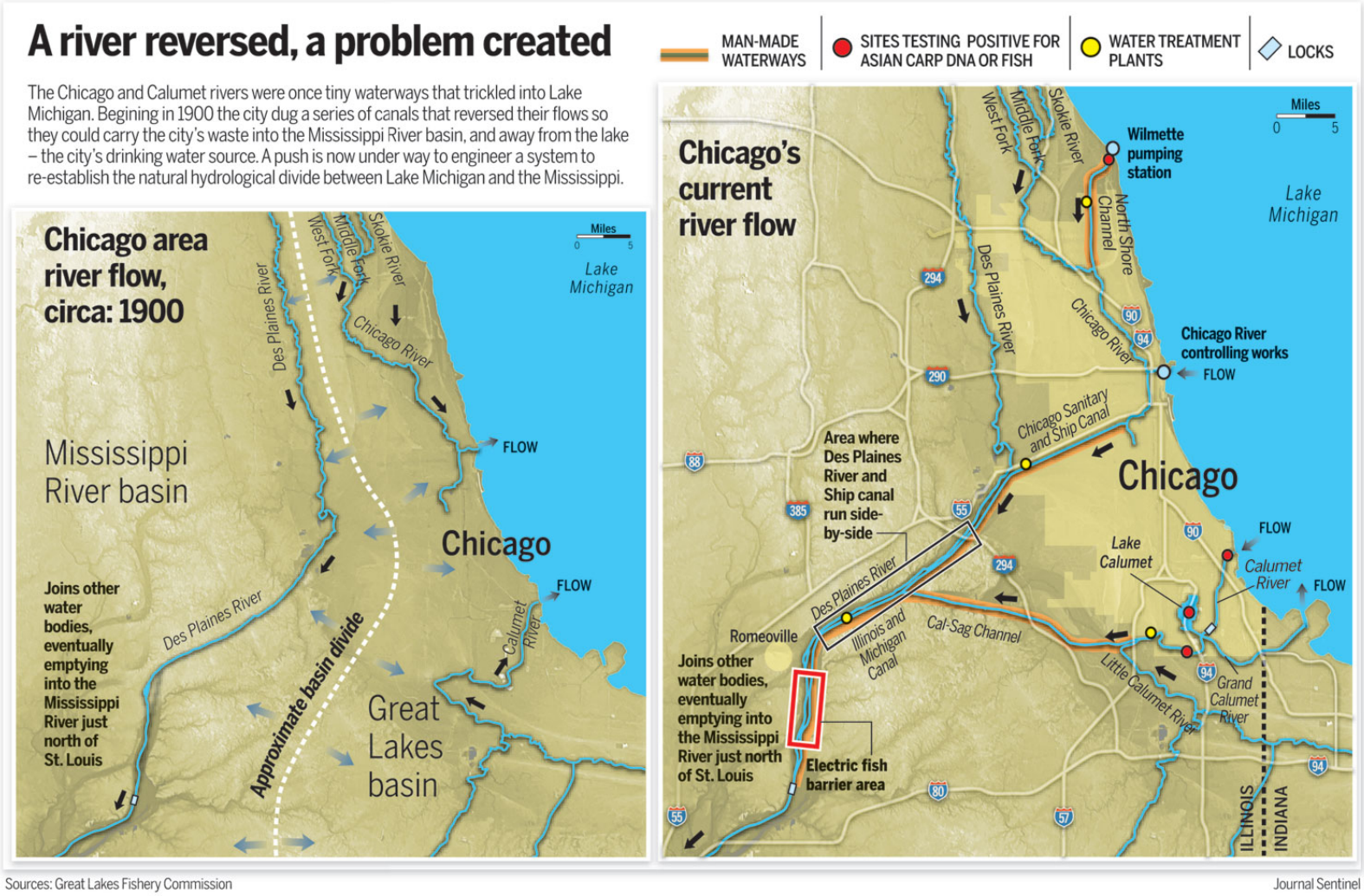
Reversed and Invaded



Source: Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel (2010)

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Yet Still a Living Ecosystem

The North Branch, seen from Ronan Park (Oct. 2012)

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Conserving the River

Understanding the river as a modified natural ecosystem (natural sciences)

Developing water quality policies (social and natural sciences)

Representing the river as a cultural resource (arts and humanities)

Restoring the river: water quality, biodiversity, riparian zone vegetation, citizen access and recreation (all disciplines)

Cultivating a sense of place

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Canoeing the North Branch

Paddling the West Fork of the Upper North Branch: here we portage around a fallen tree, within the greenway of the Cook County Forest Preserve (October 2012)

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Canoeing the South Branch

Canoe trip down Bubbly Creek, an industrialized tributary of the South Branch of the Chicago River (May 2009)

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Canoeing the Confluence

Heading south into the Loop where the branches meet;
Wolf Point in the background (October 2011)

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Using the Tools of Science

Temperature

pH

Turbidity

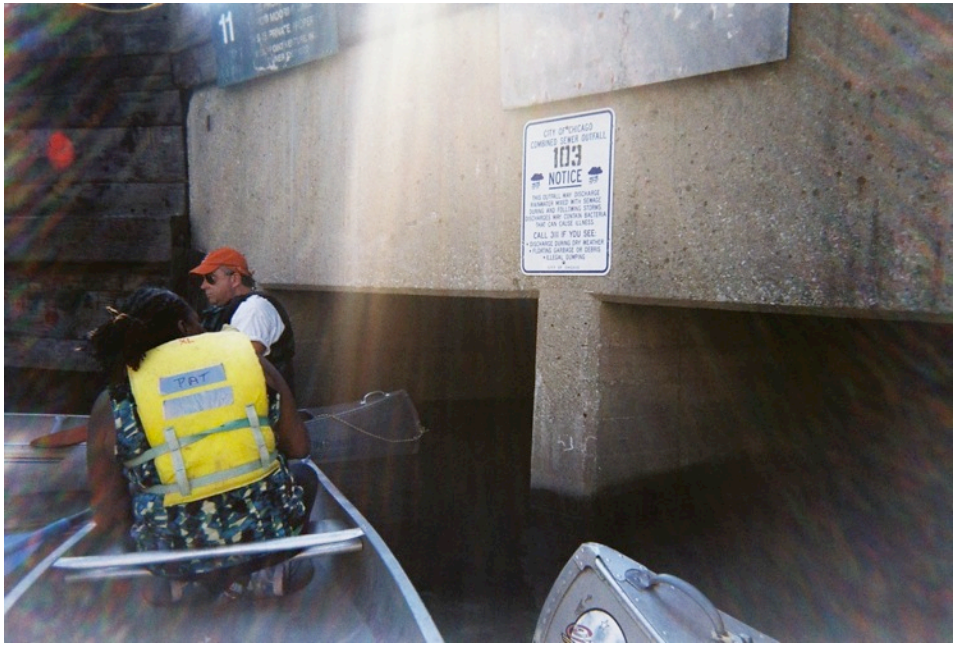
Dissolved oxygen (DO)

Nutrients (nitrate / phosphate

Bacterial indicators (coliform)

Metals and organic contaminants (lead, copper, benzene, PCBs, hexavalent chromium)

Emerging contaminants (pharmaceuticals, synthetic hormones, flame retardants)



Combined Sewage Outfall
Confluence of the
North and South Branches
(October 2011)

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Creating Opportunities for Discovery

Identifying macro-invertebrates from the
Chicago River's North Branch (May 2010)

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Making Art

Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee ("The River" 2010)

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Linking Land and River

Growing Power's Iron Street Farm, on the west bank of Bubbly Creek (2012)

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Planting a Seed

Photo by Ryan Hodgson-Rigsbee ("The River" 2010)