

The Living Land Bank

A catalyst marketplace for restoring ecosystems and local economies

Chicago Living Corridors
Applied Ecological Services
The Conservation Fund

PROBLEM: We see the tragic results that ecosystem loss and fragmentation, compounded by climate stresses, are having on nature and our communities: flooding, collapsing bee populations, water pollution from run-off, and more. These problems are hard to solve because, in many countries, most land is privately owned. Because communities have very little legal control over the treatment of private land, we rely mainly on the goodwill of enlightened private landowners to "do the right thing." Needless to say, this strategy is a slow slog in the face of powerful and accelerating forces.

SOLUTION: The Living Land Bank is a transformational idea that could swiftly and economically restore our ecosystem's "services" by engaging private land owners in sustainable land use.

- This online marketplace blends crowdfunding, sophisticated smart contracts and powerful blockchain technology that insures transparency and trust.
- The marketplace incentivizes landowners to manage their land sustainably.
- Anyone can use the marketplace: people, agencies, nonprofits or other entities who want to restore specific ecosystem services, such as managing water, storing carbon, pollinating crops, saving endangered species, etc.
- Restoring the land to work for us is often less expensive than traditional engineered solutions.
- Once we demonstrate that the system produces verified environmental results, other places around the world can use it.

EXAMPLES:

- A sewer district could buy certificates to pay and efficiently mobilize homeowners along a river to install native plants that clean rainwater.
- Farmers and conservation groups can purchase verified pollinator certificates to support crop-pollinating bees and create habitat for threatened species, such as the Monarch butterfly.

FUNDING: We submitted a grant proposal for MacArthur Foundation's 100&Change competition. The prize is \$100 million over six years. With this money, we could:

- Create the online market interface and back-end technology.
- Mobilize landowners, municipalities and landscape resources.
- Fund 20 pilot projects across four project areas (water quality, storm water management, pollinators, Monarch butterflies) in the seven-county Chicago metropolitan region.
- Measure and report results.
Create a model to attract new funders and other cities to duplicate the system.
- Once the system is established, private transactions will sustain restoration investment.

WE NEED YOU: Chicago Living Corridors is looking for volunteers to join us in supporting local habitat corridors, as well as scientists interested in maximizing the value of the proposed MacArthur Foundation Project. Follow us on Twitter @LivingCorridors and on Facebook. Contact us at info@chicagolivingcorridors.com.