

# Conservation Congress 2014

## The Results

### **Making Conservation Relevant to Illinois' Urban Communities: Expanding Our Constituencies through Outreach**

#### *Recommendations:*

1. Meet with people where they are to find out what they would like to see and do, and how they want to interact with nature. Provide opportunities to hear them multiple times.
2. Support other successful partners and programs – particularly fishing-in communities. (Chicago Park District, Forest Preserves, clubs and organizations, faith-based, health, athletic clubs, social justice).
3. Staff appropriately based on demographics and population need.
4. Recognize the importance, and increase awareness of natural resources within communities (in the neighborhoods).
  - a. Protect, enhance, steward those local areas as opportunities become available.
  - b. Connect what people see in their backyards to cultural heritage (e.g. monarch butterflies to Hispanic community).
5. Bring back “Kids for Conservation” program or similar curriculum. Tailor to communities. Include staff engagement, smart phone apps in parks, ecowatch, web-based lesson plans.
6. Transportation is major issue – make more resources available (funding) for transportation. Many grants will not pay for transportation – should make sure this can be included.