

# Reversing the Flow of the Chicago River: An Engineering Marvel or Environmental Catastrophe?

Matt Buckles

AHTC Summer Fellowship 2009

National Archives and Records Administration, Chicago, IL

## Lesson 3: Problems with Reversing the River

- Start Day 3 with groups presenting information on each document from their paragraphs. Since the same person wrote all of them (as well as the dumping document), how does his attitude and tone change based on his audience? What are all of the problems he sees with the project?
- Project and discuss US River and Harbor Act of 1899 (cited in Uppermisspollution), Who paid for the project? Under what authority? (Why was a local project financed by the federal government?) Has the purpose and enforcement of the law changed?
- Read excerpts from court documents from two court cases: [Missouri v. Illinois](#) and [Wisconsin v. Illinois](#). Analyze portions of opinions as primary sources, compare to local sources of the US Army Corps. Did the Court rule correctly?
- Pass out excerpts from the online article from the [Green Chicago Reader: "They Need it Need It, We Waste It"](#) Article. Include portions that discuss Missouri v. Illinois, Wisconsin v. Illinois – court cases challenging Illinois for reversing the flow (similar to Marshall's concerns), portions that discuss water as a commodity, and portions that discuss the possibility of re-reversing the river.
- Have students write a one page response to the article identifying the argument and bias of the author and their own opinion. Should the river be re-reversed?