



**CHICAGO AUDUBON
SOCIETY**

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Chicago Dept. Of Public Health
333 S State St #200, Chicago, IL 60604
January 11, 2021

RE: Public Comment on RMG Expansion on Southeast Side

To Whom It May Concern,

In solidarity with Southeast Side residents, the board of Chicago Audubon Society vehemently opposes the relocation of Reserve Management Group's large metal recycling facility to the Southeast Side. In 50 years of conservation work across the Chicago Region, Chicago Audubon Society has come to recognize the importance of a healthy, clean environment for both people and nature. This proposed recycling operation jeopardizes the health of residents, wildlife, and ecosystems that call the Southeast Side home.

Industrial operations should not be put before the health of people and the environment. Due to a long history of environmental racism and irresponsible industry, the Southeast Side already bears disproportionate public and environmental health burdens. The negative impacts of air pollution on human health are well-documented, but research indicates airborne contaminants like those released from this type of operation can negatively impact entire ecosystems. The United States EPA documents the type of cumulative impacts that can build up in an ecosystem in both plants and animals, increasing in toxicity and concentration as they move up the food chain. The Southeast Side is still recovering from a long history of abuse and dumping by industry, and City administrations that failed to protect communities and the environment. Millions of dollars and countless staff and volunteer hours from landowning agencies to nonprofits have gone into restoring Southeast Side wetlands, prairies and woodlands to health. A large portion of that time and funding goes toward remediation to address decades of soil and water contamination in the region's only remaining marsh habitat.

The proposed location of the RMG facility is downriver, upriver, and next door to schools and homes, but also to places like Indian Ridge Marsh, where immense effort and funding (both private and public) has gone toward creating a safe, welcoming outdoor experience. As rare birds, residents and travelers alike flock to newly restored parks and natural areas, it is paramount that the City do everything in its power to keep these areas safe and welcoming. Harmful and noxious emissions from a notorious polluter with a foul track record for violations jeopardize this vision. The City has a chance to change the course of history on the Southeast side by protecting Black and brown Southeast Side residents as it protects North side residents, and to protect our communities, environment, and our investments in green space and recreation.

RMG's track record at their Lincoln Park General Iron location does not inspire confidence that a safe, environmentally responsible company is moving to the Southeast Side. We are asking the City to take the right and responsible course of action and deny the permits that would allow RMG to operate on the Southeast Side.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Judy Pollock". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Judy Pollock
President
Chicago Audubon Society