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History Of the Chicago River
Native Americans lived in Chicago for 13000 years before European settlement.

Indians led Jacques Marquette to the lake of Illinois.

Marquette visited Chicago again on December 4th, 1674.

Jean-Baptiste was the first man to permanently settle in Chicago on March 4th, 1837.

The river was made up of the south/north branches that integrated into the main branch.

The area became important for fur trade, by the Potawatomi and by European/African settlers.
The river was the core of meatpacking and lumber industries.
In the 1870s waste was dumped into the Chicago river.
Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago (1889 and 1910) directed the flow of the river.
The North Branch was originally named the Guaire river.

The North Branch roots from the suburbs of Chicago.

The North Branch has a north shore canal that helps increase the river's north branch flow.

The north shore canal was built in 1907 and 1921.

The north shore flow was created in order to help pollution.
South Branch
The South Branch was called “Bubbly Creek”

The South Branch is commercial and industrial

The Branch is located in Chinatown

The South Branch has the lowest amount of open space per capita
The main stem of the Chicago River is rooted in Lake Michigan.

The man stem flows 1.5 miles in the opposite direction of the lake.

The branch passes through Michigan Avenue, Dearborn Street, Clark Street, and Wabash Avenue.

People use the riverwalk for walking, bicycling, and picnics.

Upper class white Americans live in this area.
WATER QUALITY & FLOW
Water Quality

- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago helped change water quality in 1970s/80s
- Increase fish populations in the Chicago river
- The “Friends” of the river organized forums in 1991 and 1992
- The rivers watergate is made up of natural and channelized rivers
- The end of the use of chlorine to disinfect wastewater ended in 1984
- In 1985, the TARP controlled pollution
- In 1974 there were only 10 types of fish in the Chicago River, this number multiplied in 2006 due to the increase in water quality
The river originally flowed into Lake Michigan.
Animal waste and industrial chemicals polluted the river and lake.
People were drinking this water resulting in cholera.
Chesbrough built the "Big Ditch" that was built in 1892; in order to reverse the flow.
Chicago's waste flowed down to the Mississippi to the gulf.
Mississippi was outraged and wanted to file a lawsuit.
On January 2nd, 1900, they broke open the last dam, and changed the flow of the river.
“Friends”

- Improvements to water quality accomplished by the metropolitan water reclamation district of greater Chicago
- “Friends” made people aware of the Chicago River
- Residents recognized the need for continued environmental improvements
Model Of the Chicago River