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***Current* Receives Leadership Award for Water Technology Innovation**

Great Lakes Protection Fund Lauds Pioneering Efforts to Improve Water Quality

Chicago, Illinois – *Current*, a water technology non-profit, was named a winner of the 2019 Great Lakes Leadership Awards for Water Technology Innovation. The Great Lakes Protection Fund today named six organizations from the U.S. and Canada as recipients of the award, which highlights innovative efforts to address immediate threats and anticipate future challenges to water quality in the Great Lakes. In announcing the award, the Fund praised *Current* for its efforts to spur innovation for the benefit of the Great Lakes Basin's people, economy and environment.

"We're thrilled to accept this award and be recognized for the work our team is doing to advance water stewardship through innovation in Chicago and beyond," said Steve Frenkel, Executive Director of *Current*. "We're proud to be among a cohort of innovative leaders committed to improving the overall sustainability of the Great Lakes region." The Fund—an innovation endowment established by the Great Lakes governors—created the Leadership Awards to celebrate efforts that accelerate new actions for protecting and improving the Great Lakes, and have the potential to improve water quality on a global scale. Winners were selected for their entrepreneurial spirit and ability to bring an influx of creative ideas, citizen involvement, private capital, and collaboration to benefit the Great Lakes.

"The team at *Current* is dedicated to addressing the challenges facing major utilities and industrial water users, and identifying, validating and deploying new technologies to meet those needs. We applaud this customer-first approach to innovation," said David Rankin, Executive Director of the Fund, in naming *Current* as a recipient of the Great Lakes Leadership Award for Water Technology Innovation. "Their board, staff and members should be proud of the work *Current* has done, and the future that it is building. New solutions to nutrient management and microbial pollution are important beginnings."

As summer fast approaches, the *Current* team is preparing to launch its biggest initiative yet – a pilot project to monitor microbial pollution in the Chicago River in real-time. Historically, microbial pollutants, like E.coli and fecal coliforms, could not be measured in real-time and required physical water samples be sent to a testing lab where they would be cultured for several days. However, recent innovations in sensing and analytical technology now make it possible to monitor microbial levels right in a waterway. Starting in the next couple months, *Current* will lead a cross-functional team of more than fifteen corporate, municipal, utility and NGO partners to execute H2NOW Chicago (H2NOW). This first-of-its-kind U.S. pilot project will demonstrate how novel technology can be used to assess water quality with a frequency never before possible.

“H2NOW is a great example of how we bring together innovators, solution providers, end-users and other essential stakeholders to solve complicated problems,” stated Frenkel. H2NOW is expected to encourage greater planning and investment in the region’s rivers. By providing real-time data, the pilot project will improve understanding of the effects of combined sewer overflows, stormwater runoff and point source pollution on water quality, which will aid long-range environmental planning for the river that directly connects to Lake Michigan. “This pilot will help ensure that the Chicago River becomes a true ecological, recreational and commercial asset that benefits all Chicagoans, and will show how innovative technologies can accelerate the revitalization of urban waterways,” Frenkel added.

With the award, *Current* received a \$15,000 prize to advance its work. The Great Lakes Protection Fund plans to work with each of the winners to identify opportunities to collaborate and promote clean water technologies and solutions that will defend the Great Lakes from future threats. The six winners of the 2019 Great Lakes Leadership Award for Water Technology Innovation are: AquaHacking, The Cleveland Water Alliance, *Current*, The Everglades Foundation, Imagine H2O, and The Water Council. For more information about the Great Lakes Leadership Awards for Water Technology Innovation, please visit <http://glpf.org/>.

About Current

Current sources and de-risks innovative water tech solutions for industries, utilities and investors, and connects innovators to opportunities. Whether you develop, use, or invest in water tech solutions, becoming a member of *Current* will help you create value, improve performance and deliver results. Launched in 2016 as a partnership of the City of Chicago, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago and World Business Chicago, *Current* is non-profit based in Chicago that leverages the city’s world-class utilities, research institutions, industries and innovation community to improve global environmental and economic impact. Learn more at www.currentwater.org.