

Coalition of 22 organizations says don't destroy Deer Grove

Friends and our partners have organized a coalition of 22 organizations, with 35,000 members and 100,000 contacts, that is calling on Cook County Commissioners to protect Deer Grove and Camp Reinberg. We are asking Commissioners to expand Quentin Road to three lanes, not five, through the preserve in Palatine. Friends has been working on this issue for more than 10 years.

Build Quentin Right, The Deer Grove Natural Areas Volunteers, Friends, and Openlands have worked diligently for years with the Cook County Highway Department on the details of the project. We have reached agreement on most issues: that a multi-use trail should be added along the east side of Quentin Road in Palatine that will run from Lake Cook to Dundee Roads; on how stormwater will be handled; on retention wall design; on the alignment of the entrances to Deer Grove West and Camp Reinberg; and on just about everything else, except for the width of the road.

The five-lane option:

- is more dangerous for residents, campers, bicyclists, drivers, walkers, and wildlife
- removes 332 more trees, including many high-quality heritage oaks
- destroys twice as much forest preserve land (permanent easement)
- fills twice as much floodplain
- results in three times as much plant-and-animal-killing salt spray and splash
- costs millions more to build and twice as much to maintain
- provides only 25 percent more capacity on a road that is busy only during rush hour

Please call your Cook County Commissioner and ask them to vote for the 3-lane alternative for Quentin Road. Search online for Chicago or Cook County elections to find your Commissioner's info.



Ron Varguson

A rusty bridge will be replaced as part of the Quentin Road improvement project. The 3-lane alternative will better protect the preserve and be safer for people and wildlife.

Building out the two-lane road to five lanes would ruin the rolling wooded character of the Quentin Road corridor that bisects the nation's very first forest preserve. Cutting deeper into this Illinois Nature Preserves buffer would also expose the restored natural area to greater amounts of salt and other pollution that can spray and contaminate the landscape hundreds of feet from the road, threatening endangered plants and animals. We have no assurances that drainage won't contaminate the groundwater that feeds a multi-million-dollar federal wetland mitigation project, killing plants and animals that can't tolerate pollution.

The three-lane alternative is sensible and balances the needs of all stakeholders. It will allow Deer Grove East and West to thrive and traffic to flow, and it will improve capacity and safety for all. Drivers will have safe places to turn into and out of Deer Grove, Camp Reinberg, and residential neighborhoods, and it will be safer for residents, campers, drivers, bicyclists, runners, equestrians, walkers, and wildlife to cross three, rather than five lanes of traffic. It will also cost millions of dollars less to build and maintain, and won't squander our limited transportation funding.

We urge Commissioners to approve the three-lane alternative and protect Deer Grove as land held in public trust.

News from around the Preserves

1 Friends receives 3 awards for great work

Friends, along with its partners that run conservation corps programs, received the 2018 Innovation in Conservation Award—Conservation Corps from the National Recreation and Park Association. The award recognizes the great work being done to address several challenges: people who have become disconnected from nature, a lack of diversity in the conservation field, and the need for more hands to help with ecological restoration.

The Chicago Audubon Society is awarding Friends with the Protector of the Environment—Political Advocacy. The award recognizes the Friends community's work to engage volunteers and conservation corps members, advocate for the preserves and the people who love them, and work together with FPCC Commissioners, staff, and partner organizations, while remaining strong and independent.

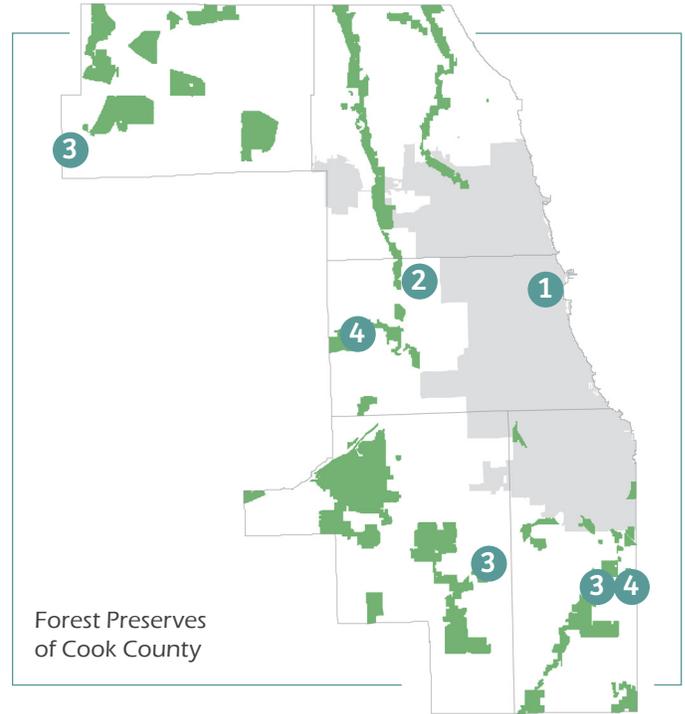
The Forest Preserve Experience Program has been named the recipient of the 2018 Nan McKay and Associates Resident Service Honorable Mention. The award honors leaders in community outreach and efforts to improve the futures of families. The five-week summer program, run in partnership with the FPCC and the Housing Authority of Cook County, introduces high-school-aged housing-authority residents to work and education in the forest preserves.

2 FPCC plan sets goals to address climate change

A new plan recognizes the challenges of climate change and the opportunities to harness the strengths within the forest preserves to address these issues. The FPCC adopted a Sustainability and Climate Resiliency Plan, which was created in partnership with the University of Illinois Prairie Research Institute. The FPCC believes that integrating sustainable practices across all operations, above and beyond the direct conservation stewardship work it does, is fundamental to fulfilling its mission. The plan, available at fpcc.com, calls for the FPCC to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 45 percent by 2030 and net zero by 2050, to implement a roadmap that will allow the preserves to be resilient in a changing climate, and to have thousands of acres of healthy lands filled with thriving native plants and animals in 32 years.

3 Nature preserve expansions push toward goal

A 380-acre portion of Wampum Lake Forest Preserve and another 100 acres of Thornton-Lansing Road Forest Preserve in the southern part of the county are being dedicated as Illinois Nature Preserves, which provides the highest level of protection for land in the state. High-quality natural communities such as sand forest, sand flatwoods, sand savanna, sand prairie, sand seep, sedge meadow, and marsh, along with many conservative species, including



four of Illinois's threatened and endangered species can be found at these sites.

Another 4.2 acres are being purchased and will expand Bluff Springs Fen Nature Preserve near Elgin. The parcel cost \$220,000 and protects additional acres at the site of this very rare fen ecosystem. The FPCC has a goal to dedicate 20,000 acres as Illinois Nature Preserves or Land and Water Reserves by 2025. These additions bring the total to 8,400 acres.

Midlothian Meadows Forest Preserve is growing by 2.33 acres with the \$260,000 purchase of the Saint Roch Friary, which is an inholding at the preserve near Oak Forest.

4 Friends joins forces with CRED

Friends and Chicago CRED (Creating Real Economic Destiny) have begun working together to prevent gun violence by providing jobs. Fourteen men are being employed through the new program, which is based on the belief that the best solution for ending gun violence is recruiting men most likely to be perpetrators or victims of shootings and transition them to jobs in the legal economy.

Chicago CRED's bold, research-based intervention strategy addresses the social, emotional, and job readiness support to place program participants in permanent, full-time jobs with private employers, at a targeted starting wage of \$12 to \$15 per hour. Friends conservation corps programming is one stop on the way to permanent employment. Participants gain essential skills for work in the conservation field, as they hone job skills important for any line of work.

Summer program provides jobs, lifelong love of preserves

Forest Preserve Experience Crew Member Derell Lawless is 17 years old and a junior at Thornridge High School in Dolton. A crew member in 2017 and 2018, he sat down with Melissa Horther, FPE Program Manager, to discuss his experiences over the past two years. The program will run again this summer.

I never would have set foot in the woods without the Forest Preserve Experience summer program. I had never been to a forest preserve or really even spent time in nature. I never would have tried canoeing or indoor rock climbing, touched a snapping turtle, or cut down an invasive tree with a hand saw. I used to be afraid of the woods and the bugs, but this program changed my mind and now I enjoy it, bugs and all.

Two years ago I was looking for a summer job in my hometown of Dolton in Chicago's south suburbs. I applied to McDonald's, Burger King, Checkers...all of the fast food spots you can think of, but I would never hear back. My mom heard about the FPE program and I applied.

I was so happy when I heard back. I just wanted a chance. I interviewed and got the job as a crew member.

This past summer was my second year in the program. I worked on a crew of 15 high school students for five weeks. We learned how to use hand tools to remove invasive trees and shrubs to open up space for native plants. We also learned about our local environment, the importance of native plants, and the effect invasive plants have on nature.

Working this summer helped me a lot with money. I learned how to manage my money better and put it into important things like getting my license, fixing my phone, and helping my mom and aunt. It felt good to help my



Melissa Horther

Derell Lawless learned important job skills and about his local environment as a crew member in the Forest Preserve Experience Program at Wampum Lake Woods.

family. My mom and grandma were proud of me for stepping up and being responsible.

Without the FPE program I probably wouldn't have done much during my summers. This program helped keep me focused and positive when it can be easy to get in trouble or waste the whole summer.

I think the FPE program is important for high school students because of the opportunity to have a first job and experience everything that comes with that like learning about being on time, working with others, and working on challenging projects in difficult conditions. We were allowed to try, to make mistakes, and to learn from it and I was grateful to be able to do that.

Also, the forest preserves need our help. These invasive plants are trying to take over and without our help they just might. It feels good to have a job helping the environment, especially in our own community.

7 new officials, lots to do

By Benjamin Cox, Executive Director

A huge change is here for the Forest Preserves of Cook County, and an even bigger one could be right around the corner. Seven of 17 commissioners are new to their seats and President Toni Preckwinkle is in a runoff election as she vies to become the next mayor of Chicago. Just as we did with the last big change eight years ago, Friends worked with five partner organizations to update our green paper on forest preserve issues to ensure candidates got off on the right foot as they campaigned last year.

As soon as we knew who won, Friends and members of the Forest Preserves Conservation and Policy Council started meeting the new commissioners, educating them about Friends, the goals of the Next Century Conservation



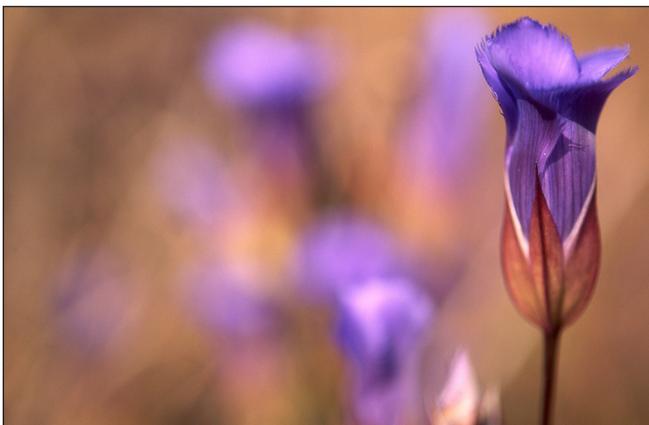
Courtesy of Cook County

Seven new forest preserve commissioners were elected in November and Friends got to work right away to make sure they are all up to speed on issues facing the preserves.

Plan, and the issues facing the preserves and the folks that love them. If the President becomes the mayor, even bigger changes could be coming soon. Stay tuned to see what's next.

10th Annual Friends Photo Contest Winners

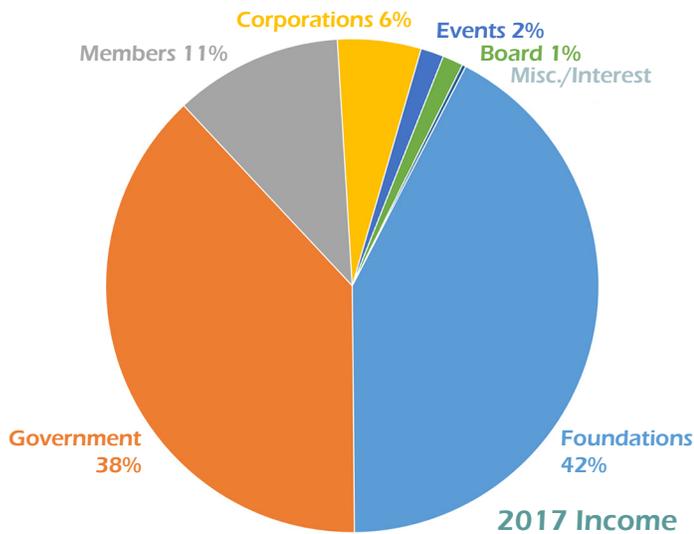
(page 4) **First Place:** Solitary sandpiper in reflection, Gary Henle, Carl R. Hansen Woods; **Second Place:** Iris weevil, Edward Boe, Crabtree Nature Center; **Third Place:** Motherhood, Kim Munroe, Busse Woods; **Best Flora:** Prairie's purple majesty, Barbara J. Bell, Somme Prairie Grove; **Best Fauna:** Bad hair day, Kim Munroe; (page 5) **Runners-Up:** Broad winged hawk, Janet Haugen, Deer Grove East; Foggy sunrise, Jeffrey Roller Jr., Sag Quarry; American ruby spot, Janet Haugen, River Trail Nature Center; Blackburnian warbler, Edward Boe, Crabtree Nature Center; Sunsets and dragon boats, Michele Valenta, Busse Woods; Spot of color cross country skier, Fidencio Marbella, Thatcher Woods; Prescribed burn, Ebony Taylor, McMahan Woods; Bottle gentian, Fidencio Marbella, Wolf Road Prairie



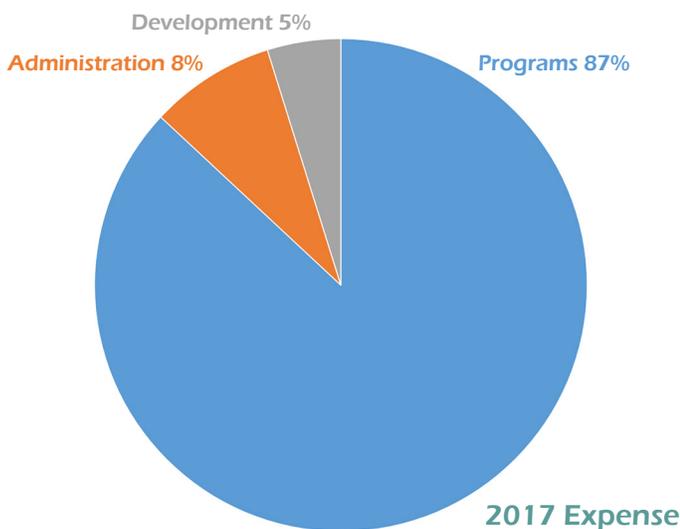


Thank you to everyone who submitted photos. To enter the 2019 photo contest, visit fotfp.org for rules and deadlines.

Friends of the Forest Preserves 2017 Annual Report



Income	2016	2017
Foundations	565,245	903,833
Government	929,967	816,394
Members	214,964	235,510
Corporations	50,094	117,253
Events	31,569	32,267
Board	27,187	28,860
Misc./Interest	179	5,185
Total	\$1,810,878	\$2,139,302



Expense	2016	2017
Programs	1,451,291	1,523,896
Administration	197,063	144,260
Development	11,228	84,511
Total	\$1,659,582	\$1,752,667

Assets	2016	2017
Net Assets at beginning year	568,916	720,212
Net Assets at end year	720,212	1,106,847
Change in Net Assets	\$151,296	\$386,635

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 Radhika Miraglia—Advocacy and Engagement Director
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 Conservation Corps Assistant Managers: Robert Abraham, Emily Helm, Hannah O’Sullivan, Laura Roncal, BreShaun Spikes, Ebony Taylor
 Conservation Corps Crew Members: Lee Carroll, Shaquille Clayton, B. Dawson Cox, Selvio DeAngeles, Kevin Dennis, Javonte Dixon, Malukah Frazier, Dean Garber, Ramon Herring, Katherine Jodlowski, Joshua Joyce, Brian Kolasa, Amber Kunz, Jelani McCollum, Daniel Medina, Alex Noe, Graciela Olmedo, Shamont Slaughter, Alex Taylor, Jesse Vasquez, Edward Vlcek, Kashawn Walker, Lance Williams, Ethan Ylisela

North Branch Crew turns one

By Hillary Peters, Crew Manager and
Laura Roncal, Assistant Crew Manager

The North Branch crew is celebrating its one-year anniversary. We are a crew of six dedicated adult Conservation Corps members, working hard at restoring and learning about the natural areas closest to the North Branch of the Chicago River. We are passionate, knowledgeable, and excited to be part of the restoration community along the North Branch.

During the short time this crew has existed, we have had a few notable successes. Last spring we helped clear a meadow at Somme Woods that was in serious need of our help. This area was completely taken over by multiflora rose and black raspberry. We used our brush cutter, chain-saws, and herbicide to ensure these nuisance plants did not return. Once we had completed our work there, the site steward reported that American woodcocks started using the area again.

A similar success was had at Watersmeet Woods, where we were able to connect our work with the work started by volunteers. We cleared an area that was being choked out by gray dogwood and buckthorn. Once we completed this work, the site looked completely different. Two separate fragments of land were connected, which allowed new plants, such as butterfly milkweed, wild indigo, and three different species of gentian to re-establish themselves in the area. Our combined knowledge of the local flora and our drive as a team make it possible to get this work done.

When asked to describe what the North Branch means to them, every crew member used the word “community” in their response.

“As a crew member with Friends of the Forest Preserves, I’ve gotten to work hand in hand with a dedicated environmental community,” said Alex Taylor. “Working alongside Forest Preserves staff, our amazing volunteer and steward network, and my fellow crew members humbles and inspires me every day at work.”

In less than a year, the North Branch Crew has been



Every member of the North Branch Conservation Corps crew used the word “community” to describe their crew and where they work. The crew works hand-in-hand with volunteers in preserves along the North Branch of the Chicago River.

able to take our passion for our work and become part of the greater North Branch community. We will continue to be successful in the upcoming years because of the support from Friends and our North Branch community.

The Crew is run in partnership with the Forest Preserves of Cook County and the North Branch Restoration Project, with additional support from the Bobolink Foundation, the Caerus Foundation, and the Illinois Clean Energy Foundation, as well as members like you. Thank you!



Maggie Goddard Knopp pets an opossum at Beer in the Woods, where wildlife displays are a huge hit, and the beer is awesome.

Have fun with Friends at fundraisers

Friends’ 2019 Swing for Sustainability golf outing at George Dunne National Golf Course in Oak Forest raised well over \$14,000. It featured 18 holes of golf, drinks all day, lunch, and a catered dinner, with skill prizes and a ton of fun. The Busse Woods Night Ride and Paddle followed in Elk Grove Village and, with almost 300 people in attendance, raised nearly \$10,000. The new canoeing option proved very popular. The second Beer in the Woods closed out the event season at LaBagh Woods in Chicago with more than 400 revelers enjoying craft beer and cider, live animal displays, and a full program of activities. And we raised a whopping \$30,000. To join us in 2019, visit fotfp.org/events.



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Good news: we've been crazy busy getting things done. Bad news: the News is late, but as they say, better late than never. Thank you for your support.



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Swing for Sustainability

Friday, June 14, 2019 | \$150 individual / \$600 foursome

Buy tickets, donate in lieu of attendance, or sponsor

Save the Date
Saturday, September 28
LaBagh Woods, Chicago

