

# Conservation & Policy Council Resource Guide

2019



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# **Conservation & Policy Council Resource Binder**

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# 1. Members

*The Conservation and Policy Council advises the President, Board of Commissioners and General Superintendent on specific steps to implement the Next Century Conservation Plan's vision of a vibrant, ecologically healthy and welcoming forest preserves system.*

*In addition, the Council develops and annually updates a strategic plan to operationalize the Next Century Conservation Plan, as well as reviewing and making recommendations for the annual budget, conservation policies and practices and long-term strategic issues.*

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## **Wendy Paulson (Council Chair)**

*Chairman, Bobolink Foundation*

**Expertise:** Conservation, Education/Interpretation, Volunteer Management

Wendy Paulson holds numerous leadership positions within the local and international conservation communities. She is Chairman of the Bobolink Foundation, which supports conservation efforts. Additionally, Wendy holds or has held leadership positions with Rare, the Student Conservation Association, the National Forum on Children & Nature, the American Bird Conservancy, BirdLife International/Audubon U.S. and the Illinois, New York and National boards of the The Nature Conservancy. Locally, Wendy served as co-chair of the Next Century Plan Commission, Director of Education at Citizens for Conservation in Barrington and is on the board of Openlands and the Field Museum's Science Action committee. A long-time educator, Wendy has taught public school in Boston, New York and Barrington, Illinois, as well as at the Potomac School in Virginia. She serves as education associate at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, has written a nature activity series for children and edited a conservation newsletter for many years. Wendy is a longtime participant in prairie and savanna restoration, and has been leading bird walks for more than thirty years.

## **Alan M. Bell**

*Partner, Charity & Associates, P.C.*

**Expertise:** Government, Finance, Nature-oriented Development

Alan M. Bell is a partner at the law firm of Charity & Associates, P.C., focusing on municipal finance and real estate finance. He is also the founder and president of The Elements Group, which focuses on nature-oriented development projects. Alan serves on the boards of Openlands, the Land Trust Alliance, the Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance and the Black Ensemble Theater, and is a member of the National Association of Bond Lawyers. He enjoys bike riding along Chicago's lakefront and hiking trails throughout the Forest Preserves.

## **Michael DeSantiago**

*Former President, Primera Engineers*

**Expertise:** Conservation; Management/Business; Working Knowledge of the CBG, Brookfield Zoo, and Other Culturally Significant Institutions

Michael DeSantiago has more than 30 years of experience in the practice of sustainable design and energy management and has a life-long interest in conservation and sustainability. He is also a LEED Accredited Professional. In addition to designing environmentally responsible and budget-compliant solutions, he is also actively engaged with local and national code-writing bodies and regularly contributes to the industry's professional organizations. Through his involvement with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Chicago and other programs, he promotes engineering as a profession to children and young adults from communities that are under-represented in the profession. Michael is a trustee of the Conservation and Education Committee and a member of the Planning and Facilities committee at the Chicago Zoological Society. He is the past President of the American Council of Mechanical & Electrical engineers and has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards related to engineering design, community development, and diversity leadership.

## **Terry Guen, FASLA**

*President, Terry Guen Design Associates*

**Expertise:** Conservation

Terry Guen is President and Principal at Terry Guen Design Associates, Inc. Her Chicago-based practice focuses on integrating ecological outdoor environments within public design, to create public spaces which can be publically accessible, aesthetic and environmentally successful.

Terry is Landscape Architect for Millennium Park, and 63<sup>rd</sup> Street Beach at Jackson Park, as well as local-landscape architect for Navy Pier, Maggie Daley Park, and the Lurie Garden. Projects include public open space Master Planning and Design for the Hudson River Park, NY, NY, Charles River Basin for the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MDC), the F&G Streets Retail District, Washington, DC. Her projects have won awards from the American Institute of Architects, Chicago Building Congress, US EPA, Midwest Construction, Friends of the Chicago River, among others. Terry is a Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, served on the Next Century Plan Commission, is Expert, Member of the US Federal Advisory Council for Historic Preservation.

## **Emily Harris**

*Executive Director, ADA 25 Advancing Leadership*

**Expertise:** Economic Development, Planning and Public Policy, Accessibility

As Executive Director of ADA 25 Advancing Leadership, Emily Harris is dedicated to creating a pipeline of leaders with disabilities who are advancing professionally and serving in civic positions throughout metropolitan Chicago. Emily previously directed ADA 25 Chicago, the commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act which engaged 200 partner organizations in creating a more inclusive city and region. She is also Senior Director at the Chicago Community Trust, working with its Disabilities Fund and equity and inclusion initiatives related to neighborhood economic development. Emily was Vice President of Metropolis Strategies, leading research and policy programs in regional economic growth, open space conservation, early childhood education, and serving as Executive Director of the Burnham Plan Centennial. With Metropolis and Openlands, she led development of the Next Century Conservation Plan for the Forest Preserves of Cook County and assisted with the development of the World Business Chicago Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs and Cook County Partnering for Prosperity plan. Emily serves on the Boards of Directors of Access Living and the Leadership Fellows Association of Leadership Greater Chicago, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning's Economic Development Committee, and the Jewish Reconstructionist Congregation Strategic Planning Committee.

## **Sylvia M. Jenkins, Ph.D.**

*President, Moraine Valley Community College*

**Expertise:** Education/Interpretation

Dr. Sylvia M. Jenkins is the President of Moraine Valley Community College. She began her involvement with Moraine Valley Community College in library science, twice receiving Master Teacher of the Year honors for incorporating technology into her teaching. Dr. Jenkins also served as Dean of Academic Development and Learning Resources and Vice President of Academic Affairs before being elected as the College's fifth president in 2012. She has received the Innovator of the Year Award and the Vernon O. Crawley Leadership Award from the college, and has chaired its reaccreditation Systems Portfolio team, Strategic Technology Planning team, and Diversity and Leadership task group. Dr. Jenkins has been appointed to serve on numerous boards and committees, including Congresswoman Robin Kelly's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Council, the Chicago-Cook County Workforce Investment Board, the Northeast Illinois Transit Task Force and the Cook County Forest Preserve District's Next Century Plan Commission.

## **Stanley Moore (Ex-officio member)**

*4th District Commissioner, Cook County Board and Forest Preserves of Cook County Board*

Stanley Moore is the Cook County Commissioner of the 4th District. Prior to his appointment, Mr. Moore developed a successful career as a public servant that includes experience in the public, private, and philanthropic sectors.

As current restaurant owner, Commissioner Moore oversees all operational and management functions for his company. He takes pride in hiring residents from the local community and has been instrumental in utilizing his business as a catalyst for economic development. As an executive in government, he oversaw major construction, transportation, and urban planning initiatives. He has also served as Assistant Area Development Director of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) Inc., Director of Development at the Henry Booth House, Division Director of the United Way of Chicago, and Legislative Budget Analyst for Illinois Senate President Emil Jones, Jr. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Illinois Masonic Lodge, and Third Baptist Church.

## **Maria Pesqueira**

*President, Health Communities Foundation*

**Expertise:** Health, Cultural Awareness

As an award-winning and visionary leader, Maria Socorro Pesqueira is a sought-after speaker addressing local, national and hemispheric audiences on a wide variety of prescient topics ranging from private/nonprofit partnerships, women and family issues, health disparities, immigration reform, violence prevention and intervention, and the future of philanthropy. Maria del Socorro Pesqueira was appointed President of the Healthy Communities Foundation (formerly The Arthur Foundation) in May 2017. Previously, she served as President & CEO to Mujeres Latinas en Accion and earlier led The National Museum of Mexican Art's Development and Marketing team. She has held leadership roles in various national and local boards including UNIDOS US, the Congressional Commission for a National Women's History Museum, Illinois Partners for Human Services, Community Memorial Foundation and the Aetna Medical Advisory Board.

## **Laurel Ross**

*Former Director of Urban Conservation, Field Museum*

**Expertise:** Conservation, Ecology, Volunteer Management, Cultural Resources

Laurel Ross has served in numerous leadership positions within the conservation community of Chicago, demonstrating a tremendous commitment to conserving the native environment of

Illinois. Laurel was the Director of Urban Conservation for the Field Museum from 2004 to 2014. In this role, she developed and oversaw programs that connected people to nature through environmental education, habitat restoration and collaboration between related environmental and cultural organizations. She has also served as Chair of Chicago Wilderness, Director of Conservation Programs for the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and Director of the North Park Village Nature Center. Laurel has many years of experience as a committed volunteer and leader in environmental stewardship through the Volunteer Stewardship Network of Illinois.

## **Shelley Spencer**

*Executive Producer, Media Consultant*

**Expertise:** Communications, Mass Media, Message and Brand Strategy

Shelley Spencer is a four-time Emmy Award winning producer/writer specializing in documentary and public affairs programming. One of those Emmy's was for *Chicago's True Nature*, a documentary film on the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. Shelley developed that documentary while serving as Supervising Producer at WYCC TV. She has a passion for public media having also served as Executive Producer for WTTW. Her broadcast work has been seen nationally and internationally. As a media consultant, Shelley draws on twenty+ years of experience in broadcast television production and promotion to create and lead communication strategies across media platforms for corporate and non-profit organizations. Her corporate clients have included Citibank, Chase, The United Way, The Red Cross, McGraw-Hill Education and Pearson educational publishing. She is a board member of the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Chicago/Midwest.

## **Mark N. Templeton**

*Director, Abrams Environmental Law Clinic at the University of Chicago*

**Expertise:** Conservation, Finance, Management/Business, High Level Government Experience

Mark N. Templeton has an extensive background in government finance and strategic planning with a demonstrated focus on environmental issues. He currently serves as Director of the Abrams Environmental Law Clinic at the University of Chicago. Prior to this role, Templeton was Executive Director of the Office of Independent Trustees for the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Trust, where he helped ensure that the \$20 billion pledged by BP was available to address claims of affected individuals. He also served in the cabinet of Missouri Governor Jay Nixon as Director of the Department of Natural Resources, where he managed approximately 1759 employees, oversaw approximately \$300 million annual budget, oversaw Missouri State Parks and directed allocation of approximately \$350 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. Additionally, Templeton was Associate Dean and COO at Yale Law School, developed strategies for environmental sustainability at McKinsey & Company and was a senior adviser to the U.S. Delegation to the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

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## 2. Council Operations

(as amended 1.9.18)

### CHAPTER 18 - CONSERVATION AND POLICY COUNCIL

#### 1-18-1: - GENERAL PROVISIONS.

- A. *Short Title.* This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Conservation and Policy Council Ordinance.
- B. *Definitions.* For purposes of this chapter, the following words or terms shall have the meaning or construction ascribed to them in this Section:
1. Council means the eleven-member Conservation and Policy Council charged with providing public recommendations to the President, Board of Commissioners, and Superintendent on all matters relating to the conservation policies of the District and the Next Century Conservation Plan.
  2. Chairperson means the chairperson of the Conservation and Policy Council.
  3. District means the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois.
  4. District Board means the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois.
  5. Member means a Member of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Conservation and Policy Council.
  6. Ordinance means the Ordinance Establishing the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Conservation and Policy Council, as amended.
  7. Plan means the Next Century Conservation Plan for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois, Resolution 14-0091, adopted by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Commissioners on February 18, 2014.
  8. President means the President of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois.
  9. Superintendent means the General Superintendent of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Illinois.
- C. *Purpose.* The purpose of the Conservation and Policy Council is to safeguard, expand and bring additional resources to the District by providing public recommendations to the President, District Board, and the Superintendent regarding conservation and other related areas, based on the Council's knowledge, skill, leadership and expertise. The Council shall review and evaluate the implementation of the Plan.
- D. *Declaration.* The District Board hereby establishes the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Conservation and Policy Council ("Council"). The District Board hereby finds and declares that the Council shall do, but not be limited to, the following:
1. Develop and annually update a five-year strategic and financial plan to operationalize the Plan and annually recommend adoption of the updated strategic and financial plan to the President, District Board, and the Superintendent of the District;
  2. Review and make recommendations to the President, District Board, and the Superintendent about the annual budget and its alignment with the strategic and financial plan;
  3. Review and make recommendations to the President, District Board, and the Superintendent about conservation policies and practices;

4. Review and make recommendations to the President, District Board, and the Superintendent about opportunities to maximize public and private financial resources to accomplish conservation goals and initiatives; and
5. Provide public recommendations, as needed, to improve the District's operations and conservation leadership.

(Ord. No. 14-0375, 9-9-14; Ord. No. 17-0395, 1-9-18)

1-18-2: - MEMBERS OF THE CONSERVATION COUNCIL.

- A. *General.* The appointed Members shall receive no compensation for their service, but may be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses while serving on the Conservation Council.
- B. *Number of Members.* There shall be eleven (11) Members of the Conservation Council.
  1. One Chairperson (1),
  2. One Ex Officio (1),
  3. Nine Members (9).
- C. *Appointment of Members.* One (1) of the eleven (11) Members shall be Chairperson, appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the District Board and one (1) of the eleven (11) shall be an Ex Officio Member. The Ex Officio Member shall be a District Board Commissioner, appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the District Board. The Ex Officio Member shall be a voting Member of the Council. The Ex Officio Member shall serve as a liaison between the District Board and the Council. The ten (10) remaining Members, including the Chairperson, shall be appointed in the following manner:
  1. Initial Appointments. The President shall appoint all Initial Members of the Council with the advice and consent of the District Board based on the criteria established in Section 1-18-3 of the District's Code of Ordinances.
  2. Subsequent Appointments. After the first term of each of the Initial Member appointments expires or are otherwise terminated, Members of the Council will be selected as follows:
  3. The President, in consultation with the Council, will appoint a Nominating Committee, comprised of at least five (5) individuals to recommend replacement or renewal of Members as terms expire.
    - a. A majority of the Nominating Committee members will be representatives of not-for-profit organizations that have as their primary focus conservation of nature, land and/or water.
    - b. One (1) member of the Nominating Committee will be a representative of a not-for-profit organization that has as its primary focus government finance and public policy.
    - c. The Nominating Committee may include up to two (2) Council Members.
  4. The Nominating Committee will review the qualifications of individuals on the criteria established in Section 1-18-3 of the District's Code of Ordinances, and will present at least one (1) nomination for each vacant position to the President before the end of the term.
  5. The President, with advice and consent from the District Board will select from the Nominating Committee's list and present one (1) name for each vacancy to the District Board for concurrence.
  6. If the Board does not approve appointment of the recommended candidate(s), the President may go back to the original recommendations of the Nominating Committee, or request additional names from the Nominating Committee.

7. Prior to their confirmation, each candidate for appointment by the President or Board of Commissioners shall submit a notarized, signed affidavit to the Chairman of the Legislation and Intergovernmental Relations Committee of the District Board, that:
  - a. Is signed by the candidate;
  - b. Is sworn under oath, under penalties of perjury;
  - c. Is notarized;
  - d. Attests that the candidate fulfills the requirements set forth under the requisite statute, ordinance, law or regulation that creates the appointment;
  - e. Attests that the candidate possesses the adequate qualifications and skills.
8. If there is any change in the information contained in the affidavit after the candidate is appointed, the candidate will notify the President and the District Board in writing within seven (7) business days of the change.

D. *Terms of Members.*

1. *Ex Officio Member.* The District Board Commissioner who is appointed as the ex officio Member shall serve on the Council for the length of the Commissioner's term. Upon an appointment or election change for the representative from the District Board, the President shall provide notice to the District Board and the Council of any such change in ex officio Member appointment.
2. *The remaining Members.* The Chairperson and the other remaining nine (9) Members of the Council shall serve terms as follows:
  - a. For the Initial Members:
    - (i) Three (3) of the Members initially appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the District Board, other than the ex officio Member, shall serve a term that expires on December 31, 2015.
    - (ii) Three (3) of the Members initially appointed by the President, with the advice and consent of the District Board, other than the ex officio Member, shall serve a term that expires on December 31, 2016.
    - (iii) Three (3) of the Members initially appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the District Board, other than the ex officio Member, shall serve a term that expires on December 31, 2017.
    - (iv) The Chairperson initially elected by the Members also shall serve a term that expires on December 31, 2017.
  - b. Thereafter, all Members including the Chairperson, but excluding the Ex Officio Member, appointed shall serve a term of three (3) years.
    - (i) Each appointed Member, whether initial or subsequent, shall hold office until a successor is appointed, except in cases of removal.
    - (ii) Any appointed Member who is appointed to fill a vacancy, other than a vacancy caused by the expiration of the predecessor's term, shall serve until the expiration of his or her predecessor's term.

E. *Vacancy.* A vacancy shall occur upon the:

1. Expiration of Member's term,
2. Resignation,
3. Death,
4. Conviction of a felony, or
5. Removal from the office of an appointed Member as set forth in paragraph "F" of this Section.

- F. *Removal of Members.* A Council Member may be removed for good cause by the President. Good cause includes inefficiency, neglect of duty, malfeasance, or any cause which renders the Member unfit for the position or unable to perform the duties of the position. The President shall provide written notice to that Member, the Conservation Council, the District Board, and the General Superintendent of the proposed removal of that Member from the Council; such notice shall state the specific grounds which constitute cause for removal. The Member, in receipt of such notice, may request to appear before the District Board and present reasons in support of his or her retention. Thereafter, the District Board shall vote upon whether there are sufficient grounds to remove that Member from office. The President shall notify the subject Member of the final action of the District Board.
- G. *Officers.* The Council shall contain three (3) Members that serve as Officers: (1) Chairperson, (2) Vice-Chairperson and (3) Secretary. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary are elected by the Council. Each of the three (3) officers, respectively, shall be entitled to vote on all matters before the Council and may be appointed to serve successive terms as officers. The Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary shall each serve for a three-year term or until his or her term expires or is otherwise terminated, whichever event occurs earlier.
- H. *Duties of Officers.*
1. The Chairperson shall:
    - a. Preside at all meetings, when present;
    - b. Execute all documents relating to Council policy or designate such responsibility as warranted;
    - c. Prepare the initial agenda for each meeting; and
    - d. Perform any other agenda duties as directed by the Council.
  2. The Vice-Chairperson shall act in the capacity of the Chairperson in the Chairperson's absence. In the event the office of the Chairperson becomes vacant, the Vice-Chairperson shall succeed to this office for the unexpired term or until the President brings forth another appointment that is recommended by the Nominating Committee and approved by the District Board.
  3. The Secretary shall maintain the Council records, including notices for and minutes of meetings and hearings.
- I. *[Standing or Ad Hoc Subcommittees.]* The Council may create Standing or Ad hoc Subcommittees. The Chairperson may appoint non-voting members to those subcommittees. The District shall assign appropriate staff to the Council so that the Council may further carry out its purposes and activities.
- J. *Disclosure of interests required.*
1. Any Member, who has direct or indirect interest in any contract or transaction with the District, shall disclose this interest in writing to the Council which shall, in turn, notify the President and the District Board of such interest.
  2. This interest shall be set forth in the minutes of the Council and the Member having such interest shall not participate on behalf of the Council in any way with regard to such contract or transaction unless the Council or District Board waives the conflict.
  3. The Cook County Board of Ethics shall have jurisdiction over the investigation and enforcement of this Section and over the sanctions for violations as set forth in Sections 1-13-4 and 1-13-5 of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County Code of Ethical Conduct.

(Ord. No. 14-0375, 9-9-14; Ord. No. 17-0395, 1-9-18)

1-18-3: - QUALIFICATIONS OF MEMBERS.

- A. Criteria to be considered in nominating or appointing individuals to serve as Members shall include:

1. Background and skills needed on the Council including, but not limited to, expertise in one (1) or more of the following:
    - a. Conservation (practice),
    - b. Ecology (science),
    - c. Education/interpretation,
    - d. Cultural resources/archeology/historic preservation,
    - e. Management/business,
    - f. Eco- or heritage tourism/market feasibility analysis,
    - g. Finance,
    - h. Public policy and planning,
    - i. Outdoor recreation,
    - j. Health and wellness,
    - k. Volunteer management,
    - l. High level government experience,
    - m. Working knowledge of the District, Chicago Botanic Garden, Brookfield Zoo and/or other culturally significant institutions affiliated with, or supportive of, the District's statutorily defined purpose.
  2. Resident of Cook County, Illinois;
  3. Availability and willingness to attend Council meetings quarterly; and
  4. Ability and willingness to:
    - a. Learn sufficient details about District management and operations in order to effectively evaluate proposed actions and reports; and
    - b. Accept and fulfill reasonable assignments from the Chairperson of the Council.
- B. No individual shall be considered for nomination or appointment to serve as a Member if such individual is one or more of the following:
1. An elected official (excluding the Ex Officio Member) or a paid staff member of an elected official;
  2. An employee of the District (excluding the Ex Officio Member) or any other government entity for which there could be a perceived conflict of interests between the interests of the governmental employer and the interests of the Council;
  3. An employee of the Chicago Zoological Society (Brookfield Zoo), Chicago Botanic Garden, or Forest Preserve Foundation;
  4. An employee of a conservation organization; or
  5. An individual who owns five (5) percent or more of, or an individual who is employed by, a business entity that is a party to a contract with the District; or any individual with perceived conflict of interest.

(Ord. No. 14-0375, 9-9-14; Ord. No. 17-0395, 1-9-18)

1-18-4: - MEETINGS OF THE CONSERVATION COUNCIL.

- A. The President shall call the first meeting of the Council. Thereafter, the Members shall prescribe the times and places for their meetings and the manner in which regular and special meetings may be called.
- B. Meetings shall be held at the call of the Chairperson, however, no less than four (4) meetings shall be held annually.
- C. A majority of the voting Members shall constitute a quorum. Recommendations of the Council shall require the affirmative vote of a majority of the voting Members of the Council present and voting at the meeting at which the action is taken.
- D. The Council may hold public hearings as it deems appropriate to the performance of any of its responsibilities.
- E. The Council shall comply in all respects with the Open Meetings Act, as now or hereafter amended, and found at 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq.
- F. The Council shall be subject to the Local Records Act, as now or hereafter amended, and found at 50 ILCS 205/1, et seq., as well as the Freedom of Information Act, as now or hereafter amended, and found at 5 ILCS 140/1, et seq.
- G. The Council shall keep records of its meetings that shall be posted on its or the District's website.

(Ord. No. 14-0375, 9-9-14; Ord. No. 17-0395, 1-9-18)

1-18-5: - ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONSERVATION COUNCIL.

- A. The Council shall submit to the District Board, the President, and the Superintendent an annual report prior to the end of each calendar year.
- B. Included in the report shall be:
  - 1. Any recommendations for additional legislation or other action which may be necessary to carry out the mission, purpose and intent of the District with respect to conservation and other related issues; and
  - 2. A report on the progress of the District towards meeting the specific goals set forth in the Plan.

(Ord. No. 14-0375, 9-9-14; Ord. No. 17-0395, 1-9-18)

### 3. Overview of Forest Preserves

#### 3.1 Overview of Holdings

Total acreage	69,381
Chicago Botanic Garden Acreage	385
Brookfield Zoo acreage	215
% of Cook County land mass	> 11.4%
Cook County population (2013 estimate)	5,240,700
Acres of forest preserves per 1,000 residents	13.2
Illinois Nature Preserves	23
Illinois Land and Water Reserves	2
Total miles of trails	406
Total miles of paved trails	199
Total miles of unpaved trails	207
Number of picnic groves	277
Natural areas acreage	58,223
Number of managed lakes/ponds	48
Number of waterways	7

#### **Amenities/Facilities**

Environmental/Nature Centers	6
Botanic Garden	1
Zoo	1
18 hole golf courses	8
9 hole golf courses	2
Driving ranges	1
Mini-golf courses	4
Indoor event rental facilities	6
Picnic shelters	183
Campgrounds	5
Boat launches	10
Canoe launches	11
Off-leash dog areas	3
Model airplane flying fields	9
Snow mobile areas	5
Model boat areas	3

*Updated 2/2018*

## 3.2 Organizational Structure

The Forest Preserves of Cook County is administered by a General Superintendent and Department Heads from each of eleven departments as follows:

The **Office of the General Superintendent** contains the executive office including the General Superintendent, development, external affairs, volunteer resources and communications.

- Arnold Randall, General Superintendent, [arnold.randall@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:arnold.randall@cookcountyil.gov)
- Eileen Figel, Deputy General Superintendent, [eileen.figel@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:eileen.figel@cookcountyil.gov)
- Cathy Geraghty, Director of Strategic Initiatives, [cathy.geraghty@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cathy.geraghty@cookcountyil.gov)
- Sharon Williams, Assistant to the Deputy Superintendent, [sharon.williams3@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:sharon.williams3@cookcountyil.gov)

**Conservation and Experiential Programming** operates six Nature Centers, three Aquatic Centers, runs the Youth Education Outreach Team and provides programs throughout the forest preserves to connect residents to nature.

- Cynthia Moreno, Director, [cynthia.moreno@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:cynthia.moreno@cookcountyil.gov)
- Jacqui Ulrich, Deputy Director, [jacqui.ulrich@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:jacqui.ulrich@cookcountyil.gov)

**Facilities and Fleet Maintenance** provides a variety of routine maintenance, repairs, renovations and services to ensure properly maintained facilities, fleet, equipment, and infrastructure, while utilizing the latest energy efficient technologies, improving productivity and responsiveness.

- (currently vacant)

**Finance and Administration** is responsible for all financial and administrative functions including budgeting appropriations and expenditures, accounting, billing and collection, payroll, information technology, Treasury, and purchasing.

- Stephen Hughes, Chief Financial Officer, [stephen.hughes@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:stephen.hughes@cookcountyil.gov)

**Human Resources** administers Cook County's Human Resource Ordinance and handles all personnel issues, including hiring, applications for benefits, processing of resignations and terminations and requests for family medical leave.

- Michelle Gage, Director, [michelle.gage@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:michelle.gage@cookcountyil.gov)

**Landscape Maintenance** is responsible for the care and maintenance of picnic areas, waste removal services and mowing.

- Liz Milan, Director, [elizabeth.milan@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:elizabeth.milan@cookcountyil.gov)

**Law Enforcement** patrols all Forest Preserve properties and enforces all state, county and District laws and ordinances to serve and protect patrons, property and natural lands of the Preserves.

- Kelvin Pope, Chief of Police, [kelvin.pope@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:kelvin.pope@cookcountyil.gov)

**Legal** provides legal services to the Forest Preserves, either through in-house legal staff or supervision of outside counsel. It provides legal advice; drafts ordinances; handles land acquisition legal matters; interprets legal statutes affecting the Preserves; and manages lawsuits. It handles employee matters which involve administrative entities such as the EEOC, the Labor Board and Civil Service Commission. It also responds to requests for information under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act, administers workers compensation claims and oversees the land acquisition program.

- Dennis White, Chief Attorney, [dennis.white@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:dennis.white@cookcountyil.gov)
- Lisa Lee, Deputy Chief Attorney, [lisa.lee@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:lisa.lee@cookcountyil.gov)

**Permits, Concessions and Rentals** issues permits for public use of Forest Preserve properties such as picnics groves and pavilions, campsites, off-leash dog areas, equestrian activities, soccer and baseball. It also coordinates rentals of Forest Preserves' pavilions and other facilities, licenses concessions, and monitors the private management of the District's golf courses and driving ranges.

- Karen Vaughan, Director, [karen.vaughan@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:karen.vaughan@cookcountyil.gov)
- Jean Sheerin, Deputy Director, [jean.sheerin@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:jean.sheerin@cookcountyil.gov)

**Planning and Development** plans, designs and implements capital improvements and restoration programs to Forest Preserve sites. It is comprised of the following sections: landscape architecture, engineering and construction, building architecture, real estate and licensing, and geographic information systems.

- Chris Slattery, Director of Planning & Development, [chris.slattery@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:chris.slattery@cookcountyil.gov)

**Resource Management** oversees trails coordination, fisheries and wildlife management, resource ecology and land and trails management.

- John McCabe, Director, [john.mccabe@cookcountyil.gov](mailto:john.mccabe@cookcountyil.gov)

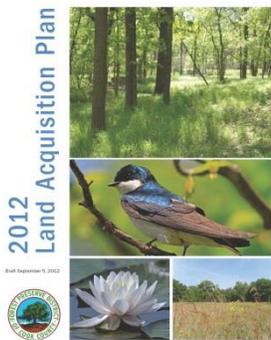
## 3.3 Master Plans



### Gateway Master Plan (2015)

<http://fpdcc.com/preserves-and-trails/plans-and-projects/gateway-master-plan/>

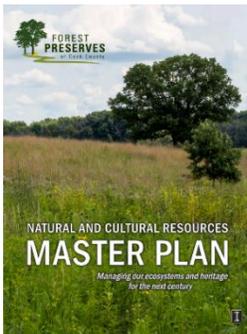
The Gateway Master Plan promotes 12 signature sites throughout the Forest Preserves' as major destinations where visitors can take advantage of free outdoor activities and healthy recreational opportunities. The plan includes recommendations for signage, wayfinding, access and amenities.



### Land Acquisition Plan (2012)

<http://fpdcc.com/land-acquisition-plan/>

The 2012 Land Acquisition Plan provides important updated geographic information and policies that will help the District identify, evaluate, acquire and manage strategic acquisition of properties will fill in gaps and strengthen the District's system protected land.



### Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan (2015)

<http://fpdcc.com/preserves-and-trails/plans-and-projects/natural-and-cultural-resources-master-plan/>

The Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan guides implementation of the Next Century Conservation Plan's natural resource goals. It also provides a natural and cultural resources framework for future land acquisition, recreation development, and capital improvement.

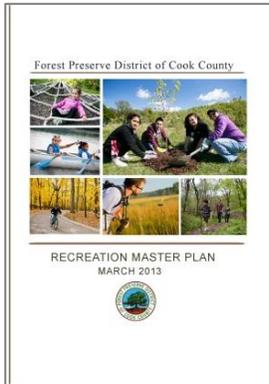


### Next Century Conservation Plan (2014)

<http://www.nextcenturyconservationplan.org/>

This Plan lays out a set of bold actions to make Cook County a national leader in urban conservation. It highlights the preserves as one of the region's greatest assets for the environment, the economy, and quality of life, but suggests that its fragile native

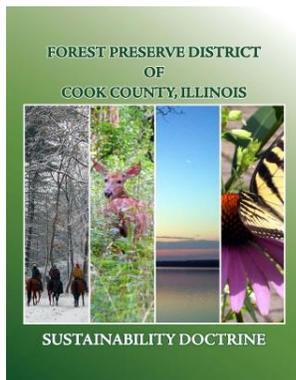
ecosystems are at risk. The Plan calls for the County to make a massive commitment to restoration, expand protected lands by at least 30%, and to make the preserves more accessible to the diverse people of Cook County.



### **Recreation Master Plan (2012)**

<http://fpdcc.com/recreation-master-plan/>

The Recreation Master Plan was developed with public stakeholder input and will provide the District with a blueprint to enhance existing recreation opportunities and identify new ones with its mission. Its goals are to get people active outdoors, create destinations, engage new users, and foster stewardship to promote healthy, active lifestyles, natural immersion and ecotourism.



### **Sustainability Doctrine (2010)**

<http://fpdcc.com/conservation/sustainability-doctrine/>

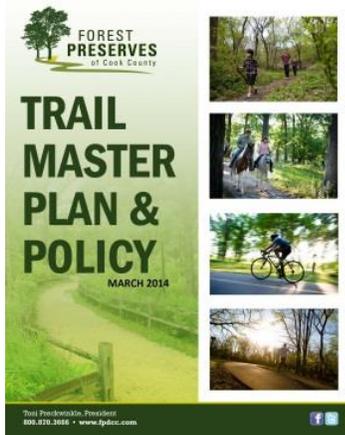
The Sustainability Doctrine provides a standard by which the District’s practices can be assessed for their impact on the sustainability of local environments, specifically the Forest Preserve lands. Developed as a result of the “Daniel Burnham Sustainability Conference” held in 2009, the plan identifies principles, objectives, and strategies for ecological sustainability, public support, stewardship, sustainable practices and financial sustainability.



### **Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan (2018)**

<http://fpdcc.com/preserves-and-trails/plans-and-projects/sustainability-climate-resiliency-plan/>

This Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan was developed to harness the various strengths within the Forest Preserves to address the pressing environmental issues of our time. Climate change, pollution, invasive species, and habitat loss and fragmentation are threatening the health of our natural spaces, as well as global ecosystems, and the Forest Preserves is dedicated to implementing responsible practices to mitigate these environmental stressors and to ensure that our native landscapes continue to thrive for generations to come.



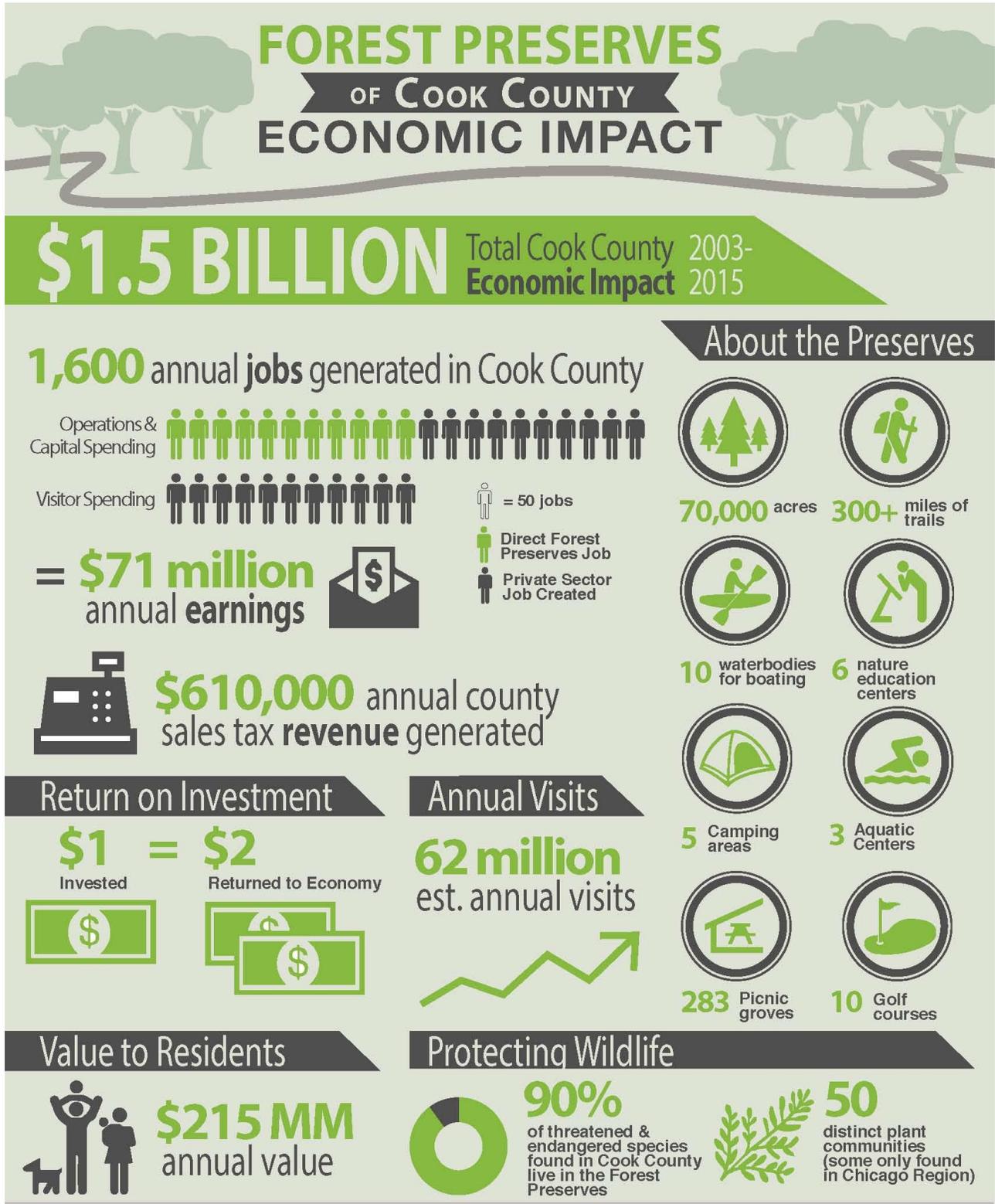
## Trail Master Plan (2014)

Website: <http://fpdcc.com/trail-master-plan/>

The overarching goal of the Trail Master Plan is to improve the user experience and identify opportunities to ensure a safe and easy-to-navigate trail system. This plan provides baseline information on the current trail system, recommends new policies for managing trails, creates a process for assessing requests to improve unrecognized trails, and prioritizes future capital improvement projects to enhance the system. It also describes the need for further information gathering, as well as, additional staff and volunteers to adequately fund, maintain and police the system as it continues to expand.

***Learn more about current plans and projects at <http://fpdcc.com/preserves-and-trails/plans-and-projects/gateway-master-plan/>***

# 3.4 Economic Impact



Source: 2016 Economic Impact Study by Camoin Associates, Inc.



Forest Preserve District of Cook County  
www.FPDCC.com



Camoin Associates  
www.CamoinAssociates.com

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## 4. Financial Overview

*A primary responsibility of the Conservation and Policy Council is to review the Forest Preserves' annual budget and makes a recommendation to the President and the Board of Commissioners about the budget and its alignment with the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan. The Council's annual review and recommendation is presented in their annual report to the President and Board.*

### 4.1 Annual Budget



The Forest Preserves' 2019 budget is \$119.1 million of which a total of \$23.3 million is provided in support to the Brookfield Zoo and the Chicago Botanic Garden. The 2019 annual budget is available on-line at <http://fpdcc.com/2019budget/> .

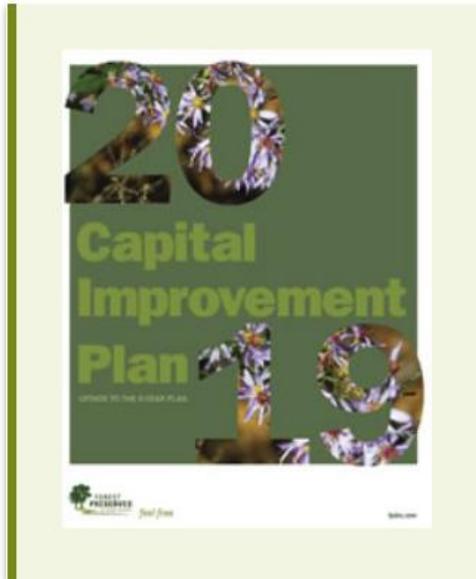
The 2019 budget represents an increase of 3.4 percent over 2018. Revenues to support this increase include an increase in the amount raised by the property tax levy totaling \$2.7 million, which captures inflationary growth as in past budgets, and other non-tax revenues totaling \$1.7 million.

The Corporate budget request, which funds the day-to-day operations, is \$61.7 million, an increase of 3.2 percent over last year. Approximately half of these funds cover cost-of-living adjustments included in collective bargaining agreements and increasing health care costs. The recommended increase to the Self Insurance Fund will be used to fund workers' compensation expenses and other insurance claims.

The 2019 budget operationalizes specific goals outlined in the FPCC's Next Century Conservation Plan, which was formally adopted in 2015. However, the significant scaling up needed to meet NCCP goals is not yet occurring.

In 2016, the Civic Consulting Alliance estimated it will cost more than \$2 billion over 25 years to complete the major elements of the NCCP including acquisition of 21,000 additional acres, restoration of 30,000 acres, and physical and programmatic changes to make the Forest Preserves more welcoming and accessible. The 2019 budget does not provide additional resources needed to further these goals; resources are simply not available at this point in time. In addition, the 2019 budget does not address the district's on-going pension deficit, a problem faced by many local government agencies. The Forest Preserves will continue to work with state and local elected officials to reach a long-term and sustainable solution to pension underfunding.

## 4.2 Capital Improvement Plan



### Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan (2019 Update)

<http://fpdcc.com/cip/>

In addition to increasing pressures on its operating budget, the Forest Preserves also face urgent capital needs. Older facilities and an expansive network of parking lots and roadways throughout the Forest Preserves suffer from years of deferred maintenance. While the district has addressed a wide range of urgent capital needs in recent years, an estimated backlog of \$30 million in deferred maintenance remains. In 2019, the Forest Preserves will request authority to issue a modest capital bond of approximately \$8 million to fund its most urgent capital improvements (such as roof repairs, boiler replacements, and parking lot repairs).

## 5. Overview of the Chicago Botanic Garden, the Chicago Zoological Society, and the Forest Preserves Foundation

*The Forest Preserves has unique partnerships with the and Chicago Botanic Garden and the Brookfield Zoo. These facilities are operated as public-private partnerships: they are owned by the Forest Preserves and managed by the non-profit Chicago Horticultural Society and the Chicago Zoological Society, respectively. Together the Zoo and Botanic Garden draw millions of visitors every year.*

*The Forest Preserves Foundation was founded in 2006 to engage in protecting and restoring the treasured natural habitats of the Forest Preserves of Cook County and to enhance the outdoor experiences of all communities.*

### 5.1 Chicago Botanic Garden



The Chicago Botanic Garden is located in Glencoe, IL, in North Cook County. The Garden is a public-private partnership located on land owned by the Forest Preserve District of Cook County and operated by the Chicago Horticultural Society. The 385-acre Garden features 27 distinct gardens and four natural areas, uniquely situated on nine islands surrounded by lakes. With its world-renowned plant collections and displays, the Garden is one of the world's most visited public gardens, with an annual attendance of more than one million visitors. The Garden is also a preeminent center for plant-

based education, research, and urban agriculture.



#### *History*

The Chicago Horticultural Society was founded in 1890 by many of the same civic leaders instrumental in the World's Columbian Exposition and the founding of the Art Institute of Chicago. Driving the Society's early mission was the City of Chicago's motto *Urbs in Horto*, meaning "city in a garden." In 1962, the Society's modern history began when the Society agreed to help create and manage a new public garden. With the groundbreaking

for the Chicago Botanic Garden in 1965 and its opening in 1972, the Society created a permanent site. From its early work to the internationally renowned Chicago Botanic Garden, the Society cultivated the power of plants to sustain and enrich life. Today, through the Garden, the Society reaches millions of people annually, representing all backgrounds, ages, abilities, and interests.

## *Mission*

The Chicago Botanic Garden's mission: We cultivate the power of plants to sustain and enrich life.

Our mission is based on three core beliefs:

- We believe: The future of life on Earth depends on how well we understand, value, and protect plants, other wildlife, and the natural habitats that sustain our world.
- We believe: Beautiful gardens and natural environments are fundamentally important to the mental and physical well-being of all people.
- We believe: People live better, healthier lives when they can create, care for, and enjoy gardens.

## *Education*

The Chicago Botanic Garden provides hands-on educational programs for approximately 152,1500 adults, teachers, students and families each year. Some of these include adult horticulture and gardening classes, teacher workshops, programs for high-school and college students and graduates within the Science Career Continuum, Camp CBG, and weekend family classes and drop-in programs. Conserving plants and their habitats is one of the most significant challenges of our time and is the major focus of Chicago Botanic Garden education programs. In addition to on-site classes, the Garden serves at risk Cook County citizens and formerly incarcerated youth through its Windy City Harvest urban agriculture and horticulture jobs-training programs. The Windy City Harvest Apprenticeship program is offered in partnership with the City Colleges of Chicago.



## *Conservation*

The Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Plant Science Conservation Center located at the Garden provides laboratories and teaching facilities for more than 200 plant scientists, land managers, students and interns whose research is critical to fulfilling the Garden's efforts to save our planet by saving our plants. The Plant Science Center is open to the public, and visitors can learn about each of the nine laboratories through interpretive panels and interactive displays. They may also visit the 16,000-square-foot Green Roof Garden—one of the largest publicly accessible green roofs in the country. In conjunction with Northwestern University, the Garden offers a graduate program in plant biology and conservation and is contracted by the U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management and other federal agencies to train more than 100 scientists annually for conservation work on federal lands in 12 western states.

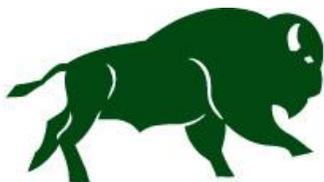
## *Budget*

Through its public-private partnership with the Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Chicago Botanic Garden receives an annual appropriation of approximately \$9.3 million or 25% of the Garden's annual operating budget. The Garden earns and raises over \$28 million in additional funds through membership, earned revenues, grants, and private/foundation/corporate donations.

Throughout the Garden's history, the overwhelming majority of capital investment has come from private donors and has been used to build new gardens and facilities. In recent years, state and federal grants have provided important funds for infrastructure projects, such as shoreline restoration and the Garden wall and berm. The projects included in the \$125 million capital and endowment initiative for the Keep Growing strategic plan which will enable the Chicago Botanic Garden to continue to engage, educate, and inspire, and to improve plant and ecosystem health close to home and around the world.

Due to its own critical budget challenges, the Forest Preserves' 2018 budget reduced funding to the Garden by \$400,000, lowering its allocation to \$8.9 million. The Forest Preserves will continue working with the Garden to seek additional resources needed for on-going operations and critical capital needs.

## **5.2 Chicago Zoological Society**



### **Chicago Zoological Society**

The Chicago Zoological Society (CZS) operates the Chicago Zoological Park (aka Brookfield Zoo), which opened in 1934 on land owned by the Forest Preserves of Cook County in Brookfield, Illinois, in West suburban Cook County. CZS is a private nonprofit conservation organization that is internationally recognized for its leadership roles in animal welfare, conservation, and education. In 2017, nearly 200,000 Illinois students visited Brookfield Zoo as part of organized field trips to leverage the zoo as a natural learning laboratory and extension of the classroom. The zoo also serves as a potent economic engine that has generated more than \$1.5 billion in economic activity for the region's economy in the past decade. Brookfield Zoo was the most popular paid cultural attraction in the Midwest with over 2.2 million guests, 520,000 members, and nearly 331,000 Facebook followers in 2017. By providing extraordinary experiences and programs at Brookfield Zoo and in diverse communities throughout Cook County, CZS seeks to influence an increasingly urbanized population's attitudes and behaviors about nature and wildlife. Indeed, animals at Brookfield Zoo serve as ambassadors for their counterparts in the wild, many of which are extinct or on the verge of extinction. CZS cares for more than 5,500 animals representing over 500 species. Brookfield Zoo is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and recently became the first zoo in the nation to achieve Humane Certification from the American Humane Association, the country's first national humane organization.

## History

In 1919, just a few years after the establishment of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Edith Rockefeller McCormick (daughter of John D. Rockefeller) donated 83 acres of land in Brookfield to the Forest Preserve District for the development of a zoological park. Then President Peter Reinberg organized a “Zoological Gardens Committee” to study the design, management and operation of modern zoological parks and to benchmark US zoological gardens. At their recommendation, the Chicago Zoological Society, a private not-for-profit entity, was chartered in 1921, entering into a public-private agreement with the Forest Preserves to develop, operate and maintain the Chicago Zoological Park (subsequently adopting “Brookfield Zoo” as its informal name). The Forest Preserves would annually levy taxes necessary for the maintenance and operation of the zoo, including the maintenance, care and management of all structures, enclosures and improvements made. When it opened in 1934, Brookfield Zoo was the first-of-its-kind modern ‘bar-less’ zoological park in North America, in which animals were cared for in naturalistic settings by using moats to separate animals from guests. Today, the partnership between CZS and the Forest Preserves of Cook County is considered one of the most successful relationships of its kind in the nation.

## Mission

The mission of the Chicago Zoological Society is to inspire conservation leadership by connecting people with nature and wildlife.

## Community Engagement and Social Innovation

CZS provides optimal care to its animals at Brookfield Zoo, but also demonstrates an unparalleled level of care and concern for children, families, and educators in underserved communities in Cook County.



Through our work at Brookfield Zoo and in diverse neighborhoods throughout the county, CZS is building an inclusive conservation movement that embraces people of every background and ability. With the support of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, CZS is mobilizing the next generation of biologists, scientists, conservationists and educators to address local and global environmental issues. CZS will continue to advance its STEM leadership role through award-winning community youth programming and teacher training initiatives in underserved communities, by

offering master’s degree programs, and by training other informal educational leaders in our Naturestart initiative. CZS is also advancing noticeable deliverables through its vendor and staff diversity efforts, and continues to provide more than 500,000 annual free passes to veterans,

individuals with disabilities, students, victims of domestic violence, and families in underserved communities. In order to ensure Brookfield Zoo's accessibility to all communities, we also promote more than 52 annual free days and provide free zoo passes at suburban and city public libraries for check out any day of the year. Through Social Innovation, CZS will better connect people and communities with its conservation mission while setting a new standard for the role that accredited organizations play in society.

### *Animal Welfare & Conservation*

Animals at Brookfield Zoo live long and enriched lives due to the advancements in the science of animal welfare being pioneered by CZS. This includes industry-leading innovations in state-of-the-art care and veterinary medicine, husbandry, nutrition, and endocrinology. Brookfield Zoo was the first zoo in the world to acquire a complete digital imaging suite, which includes a CT scan complemented by 3-D imaging. The zoo is also home to the most advanced zoo nutrition program of any accredited zoo and home to one of two full-service endocrinology labs among accredited organizations. CZS takes a unique, science-based approach to integrating professionals from a variety of disciplines and institutions—behavioral husbandry, endocrinology, population management, veterinary science, nutrition, and enrichment with the goal of assessing optimal welfare from an animal centric perspective. Key to the success of CZS's international leadership role in animal welfare is the development of dynamic partnerships and collaborations with accredited zoos and aquariums, nationally and internationally, animal professionals, and universities.



CZS also conducts pioneering field-based conservation and research work around the world. CZS staff is active on just about every continent and manage a number of hallmark initiatives. This includes the world's longest running dolphin research and conservation program in Sarasota Bay, Florida and an innovative conservation and research initiative based in Punta San Juan, Peru to support the viability of semi-aquatic species and nearby people and communities. In support of African elephants, CZS is active through a Botswana-based partnership in the Okavango Delta and participates in the 96 Elephants Campaign to combat poaching and the global demand for ivory. CZS intellectual property includes a comprehensive algorithm and software program that is used globally to support population management and viability of endangered species, both in the wild and under professional care.

## *Budget*

Through its public-private partnership with the Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Chicago Zoological Society generally receives an annual appropriation of approximately \$15 million or 22% of the total cost of the zoo's operating needs, award-winning animal care and community-based education investments. However, CZS's ability to operate and provide valuable conservation and community programming is based in large part on our ability to maintain and rebuild Brookfield Zoo's 1920s-era infrastructure. The zoo requires \$8 million annually in maintenance and repairs alone, not including the over \$100 million of deferred capital maintenance that must be addressed in order to avoid exhibit closures. Additional investment in the zoo's infrastructure will enable CZS to grow the zoo's role as a top tourism attraction and economic engine, and sustain impact investments being made in diverse Cook County communities.

Due to its own critical budget challenges, the Forest Preserves' 2018 budget reduced funding to the Zoo by \$600,000, lowering its allocation to \$14.4 million. The Forest Preserves will continue working with the Zoo to seek additional resources needed for on-going operations and critical capital needs.

## 5.3 Forest Preserve Foundation



### Board of Directors

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Forest Preserves of Cook County

**Dr. Stuart Strahl**  
Chicago Zoological Society

**Ewa Weir**  
Jones Lang LaSalle

**Claire Williams**  
Environmental Design International

**Shelley A. Davis, President**  
Forest Preserve Foundation



## We are the Forest Preserve Foundation

The Forest Preserves of Cook County cover nearly 70,000 acres of ancient prairies, pristine wetlands and wide-open spaces. They are the largest forest preserves in the United States, teeming with wildlife and biodiversity that offer rich outdoor recreational and environmental education opportunities.

As the philanthropic partner to the Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Forest Preserve Foundation supports programs and activities that give everyone access to these natural treasures of Cook County. Through our fundraising, we help keep the Preserves ecologically healthy and inviting and connect people of all backgrounds to nature.

**OUR IMPACT:** Since 2012, the Foundation has granted more than **\$1.3 million** to the Preserves to support programs that conserve natural habitats, provide paid skills-building opportunities for young people, supplement recreation fees for families of modest means and assist with memorial tributes in the Preserves.

With your support, these efforts  
will make life better for us all.

### Programs the Foundation funds

**Conservation Corps:** Summer and year-round internships for teens and young adults to gain work experience and exposure to careers in conservation, while advancing restoration goals in the Forest Preserves of Cook County.

**Public Art and Nature Play:** Creative, educational and recreation areas designed to bring individuals into the Preserves for fun and interactive experiences.

**Family recreation:** To ensure that no family is prevented from experiencing camping due to financial challenges.

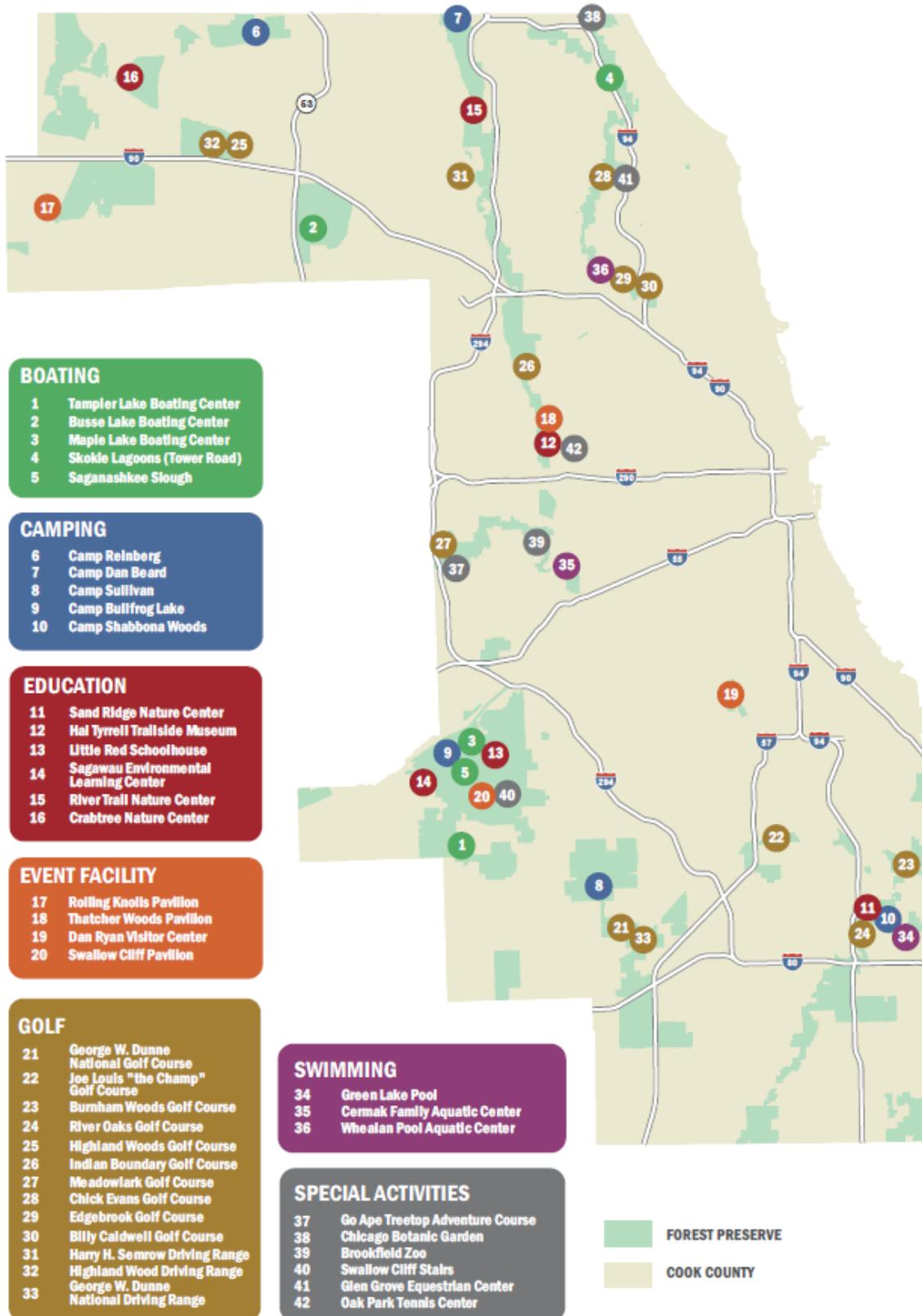
**Memorial Benches and Trees:** Opportunities for those who wish to honor a special person or occasion in the Preserves.

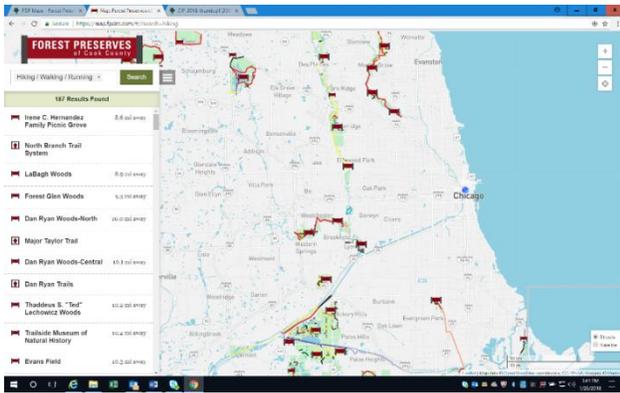
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## 6. Maps & Guides

The Forest Preserves publishes a wide range of maps and guides by region, and for individual sites and nature centers. A selection of maps is provided with this resource guide.

### POPULAR ATTRACTIONS





**Interactive Web Map.** In 2017, the Forest Preserves launched an interactive web map to help visitors plan trips, navigate through the preserves and discover new opportunities. You can search the map by activity (such as hiking, camping, etc.), or by location. The web map, along with other maps of trails, picnic groves, and nature centers, can be found on the website at <http://fpdcc.com/preserves-and-trails/maps/>

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## 7. Additional Resources

*Various organizations, books, documentaries and other resources provide information about the history of the Forest Preserves, strategies to protect and conserve natural areas, the impact of nature on human health, and many more nature-related topics. An overview of these resources is provided in this section.*

### 7.1 Forest Preserves Historical Archive



#### **Forest Preserve District of Cook County Archive**

Explore the official Forest Preserves of Cook County archive at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC)

Richard J. Daley Library. The archive collection contains materials documenting the history of the FPDCC, the people who founded it, day-to-day operations, and its planning, construction, and development. It includes correspondence, memoranda, reports, financial records, legal files, construction plans and blueprints, minutes of meetings of the Board of Forest Preserve Commissioners and of advisory bodies, and photographs. Please visit <http://library.uic.edu/collections/fpdcc> to access the digital version of the archive. You may also visit the Library to view controlled access materials not available online. Call (312) 996-2742 to reach the Special Collections and University Archives section of the Library for assistance.

### 7.2 Chicago Wilderness



**Chicago Wilderness** is an alliance of more than 300 public and private organizations working together to protect, restore, study, and manage the natural ecosystems of the Chicago region, contributing to the conservation of global biodiversity and enrichment of local residents' quality of life.

The members of Chicago Wilderness work collaboratively in four program areas: green infrastructure, restoring nature to health, education and communication, and climate action. Chicago Wilderness has developed, funded, and implemented more than 500 collaborative projects to protect, restore, manage and study the natural areas of our region, and to inspire people to become stewards of our land and waters. For more information on Chicago Wilderness visit [www.chicagowilderness.org](http://www.chicagowilderness.org).

Chicago Wilderness maintains a resource page that includes the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights, Atlas of Biodiversity and Biodiversity Recovery Plan as well as the Chicago Wilderness Climate Action Plan for Nature, among other documents. Visit <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/resources/> to access these resources.

## 7.3 Articles, Books, Blogs & Documentaries



### Chicago's True Nature: The Forest Preserves of Cook County

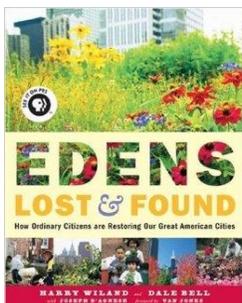
The Forest Preserves of Cook County, in partnership with WYCC PBS Chicago and Juneteenth Productions, is proud to present "Chicago's True Nature: The Forest Preserves of Cook County."

This emmy-award winning documentary captures the sights and sounds within the Forest Preserves as it marked its 100th anniversary throughout 2015. Audiences will see and learn about the benefits of nature, the impact of open land to our quality of life and what lies ahead in the next century for the one of the oldest and largest forest preserve systems in the nation. View the documentary at <http://fpdcc.com/chicagos-true-nature-forest-preserves-cook-county/>



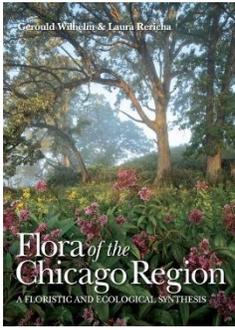
**City Creatures Blog** - As urban populations grow, and contact with nature becomes more constricted, is our psychological and social well-being in jeopardy? Are healthy ecological communities, biological diversity, and even wilderness compatible with urban areas? An extension of The Center for Humans and Nature's City Creatures project, this blog explores how cities can be remarkable places that

offer opportunities for intimacy, connection, and transformation with other species, and with one another, in our shared urban habitats. *City Creatures: Animal Encounters in the Chicago Wilderness* will be published by the University of Chicago Press in Spring 2015. Visit [www.humansandnature.org/blog/](http://www.humansandnature.org/blog/) for more information.



**Edens Lost and Found** – Highlights what communities all across the country are doing to revive their ecosystems and, as a result, improve the quality of life of all its citizens. Award winning film makers Harry Wiland and Dale Bell herald an exciting sea change in the relationship between ordinary citizens, environmental groups, and local government. This PBS special series witnesses and records a new spirit of cooperation among neighbors, planners, architects and builders, city officials, and government

agencies. Edens Lost and Found is also available as a companion book. Visit <http://mediapolicycenter.org/initiatives/edens-lost-found/> for more information.



**Flora of the Chicago Region by Gerould Wilhelm & Laura Rericha** is a thorough look at the plant communities within Chicagoland and beyond, detailing nearly 3,200 plant species and documenting the delicate, yet powerful world of plants, their pollinators, and the environment.

Rericha-Anchor has worked for the Forest Preserves since 1997, and in that time, she has served an important role in protecting and preserving the plants and animals of the Forest Preserves. Through exploration, research and documentation, her contribution to the Forest Preserves' restoration

efforts and the health of the region's plant and animal communities is invaluable. The book is available at <https://www.indianaacademyofscience.org/publications/books-and-special-publications/flora-of-the-chicago-region-a-floristic-and-ecolo>



**Hunting for Frogs on Elston, by Jerry Sullivan** - A selection of savvy observations on urban ecology from one of the Midwest's foremost authorities on the subject, Hunting for Frogs on Elston collects the best of naturalist Jerry Sullivan's weekly Field & Street columns, originally published in the Chicago Reader Visit [www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/H/bo3616076.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/chicago/H/bo3616076.html) for more

information.

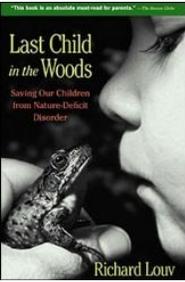


**Jens Jensen: The Living Green Documentary** - Jensen's stamp, the 600 parks he designed in the prairie style, and the philosophy that all people, regardless of race or income, should be able to partake of nature, to create community, a stronger sense of self-reliance, easy access to food, sanity, and today, decreased obesity rates, could not be more prescient.

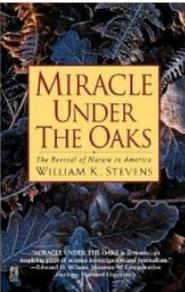
In the 1900s Jensen began the battle over issues we still face today: poverty, park and food deserts, and crooked politics. He reimagined the native prairie in the parks he designed for the workers, giving them the same benefit of nature as their upper class bosses. Though he worked for Ford, Insull, Armour, Walgreens, Rosenwald and "titans of industry," his heart, he said, "belongs to the people." Jensen's greatest act, stopping the industrialization of the entire Indiana shoreline by Andrew Carnegie and JP Morgan, to turn it into a national park, made him one of the nation's first, unsung, environmental activists.

Jensen used his art as activism to create a sustainable city, his "Plan for the Greater West Side" which included a walkable community center, community gardens and verdant boulevards could easily be the basis of a sustainable urbanism plan for today's city.

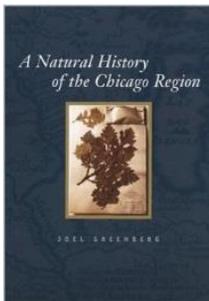
Visit [www.jensjensenthelivinggreen.org/](http://www.jensjensenthelivinggreen.org/) for more information.



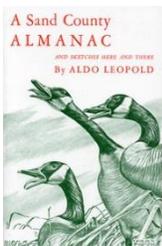
**Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder, by Richard Louv** - In this influential work about the staggering divide between children and the outdoors, child advocacy expert Richard Louv directly links the lack of nature in the lives of today's wired generation—he calls it nature-deficit—to some of the most disturbing childhood trends, such as the rises in obesity, attention disorders, and depression. Visit <http://richardlouv.com/books/last-child/> for more information.



**Miracle Under the Oaks, by William K. Stevens** – Miracle Under the Oaks describes the ten-year volunteer effort to restore “Vestal Grove,” a badly degraded tract of land north of Chicago. Starting in 1977, a volunteer group led by Steve Packard began to restore what they thought was tallgrass prairie, but discovered that the land had originally been a savanna of oaks and grasses. Though their work, Packard’s group has shown the effectiveness of volunteer environmental activism and has stimulated widespread interest in the ecology of savannas.



**A Natural History of the Chicago Region, by Joel Greenberg** - In *A Natural History of the Chicago Region*, Joel Greenberg takes readers on a journey that begins in 1673 with Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet—the first Europeans known to have visited the Chicago region—and that we're still on today. This is a fascinating story, told with humor and passion, of forests battling prairies for dominance; of grasslands plowed, wetlands drained, and species driven to extinction in the settlement of the Midwest; and of caring conservationists fighting to preserve and restore the native plants and animals. Intermingling historical anecdotes and episodes straight from the words of early settlers and naturalists with current scientific information, Greenberg places the natural history of the region in a human context, showing how it affects our everyday existence in even the most urbanized landscape of Chicago. Visit <http://joelgreenberg.com/books-and-other-writings.html> for more information.



**Sand County Almanac, by Aldo Leopold** - Admired by an ever-growing number of readers and imitated by hundreds of writers, *A Sand County Almanac* written by Aldo Leopold serves as one of the cornerstones for modern conservation science, policy, and ethics. Describing the land around the author's home in Sauk County, Wisconsin, the collection of essays advocate Leopold's idea of a "land ethic", or a responsible relationship existing between people and the land they inhabit. Edited and published by his son, Luna, a year after Leopold's death, the book is considered a landmark in the American conservation movement. Visit <http://www.aldoleopold.org/AldoLeopold/almanac.shtml> for more information.

## To Preserve and Protect . . .

**Do Forest Preserves face challenges today? Just look at what they overcame to get started.**

*By Stephen F. Christy, Jr., CHICAGO WILDERNESS, Winter 1999*

Our northeastern Illinois forest preserves total more than 100,000 acres and represent the largest tract of locally-owned public conservation land in the nation. Their benefits for our environment, recreation and education are incalculable, and they preserve much of Chicago's natural charm which, without their existence, would certainly have been lost to the area's growth.

Of the millions of users of our Forest Preserves today few would believe it took more than 20 years for the dream of the preservation of these lands to become a reality. This magnificent civic accomplishment came about largely through the determined efforts of two great Chicagoans: the architect Dwight Perkins (1867-1941), best remembered today for his visionary designs of many of Chicago's public schools, and the landscape architect Jens Jensen (1860-1951), nationally known for his park designs in Chicago and other cities and a life-long champion of conserving America's landscape. Perkins was level-headed, thorough, and methodical, while Jensen was an outspoken, emotional, and charismatic leader. Together they made a good team for the long work ahead.

As early as 1894 Jensen, from his frequent local wanderings, had sketched a map of lands then far-distant from Chicago that he felt should be preserved for future generations. Perkins himself was constantly urging people to look ahead on Chicago's growth, astounding people in 1902 by claiming:

"Chicago will be a city of 10,000,000 inhabitants within the next 50 years, and when we are planning for the city's future we must take pains not to be so short-sighted as to overlook it. We have a right to dream — if we are wide awake when we do it."

In 1899 a civic group known as the Municipal Science Club, of which Jensen and Perkins were members, began a study of Chicago's current parks and playgrounds. The Club's report led to the Chicago City Council establishing in 1901 a Special Park Commission having a membership of Jensen, Perkins, and other civic leaders as well as aldermen and park commissioners. The report they prepared said, "In the rapid growth of Chicago north, west, and south, thickly settled communities are approaching natural park territory and other extensive open areas which are suitable park sites and could be improved without a great expenditure of money before the rapid march of commercial interests and before suburban settlements efface the beauties of nature and destroy the usefulness of these spaces for parks."

***"In the rapid growth of Chicago north, west, and south, thickly settled communities are approaching natural park territory and other extensive open areas which are suitable park sites."***

As with most novel ideas, this statement had precedent to lend it strength. The Boston landscape architect, Charles Eliot, had convinced that city to set aside 10,000 acres of outer parks during the 1890s, providing Boston with a total open space system then unsurpassed in the nation. Perkins' wife Lucy, a writer and artist, visited Boston and found this system "...so arranged that parks are accessible from all parts of the city, and it is difficult to think of any Boston child as shut away from the beauties of nature."

So well-received were the Special Park Commission's recommendations that in 1903 Cook County Board Chairman Henry Foreman formed the Outer Belt Park Commission and charged it with "the creation of an outer belt of parks and boulevards encircling Chicago." At the same time the Special Park Commission, seeing that its concerns for playgrounds and inner-city parks were well on the way to solution, turned to the larger question of the outer parks. These efforts culminated in 1904 with Foreman's publication of *The Outer Belt of Forest Preserves and Parkways for Chicago and Cook County*. This publication, edited by Perkins and having a lengthy section by Jensen describing the proposed lands, stands today as the culmination of a decade of diligent groundwork by these two men as well as a classic document from Chicago's great age of civic improvement. Contributing to it also were other well-

known civic figures, such as Foreman; landscape architect Ossian Simonds, designer of Graceland Cemetery; meat packer Oscar Mayer; and University of Chicago sociologist Charles Zueblin.

Perkins first dealt with the lack of open space in Chicago, concluding that past city growth revealed largely an "enormous waste of treasure, time, and human life due to the lack of forethought and confidence in the city when it was originally planned."

The Commission's report went on to advocate in detail the preservation of those lands which, for many years, had been recognized as "naturally beautiful": a crescent surrounding Chicago, starting at the north in the Skokie and North Branch valleys, passing west of the city along the Des Plaines River, and turning east along the Sag valley to Lake Calumet after embracing the highlands of the Palos.

The second half of the report, written by Jensen, dealt in greater detail with, as he called it, "the movement for acquisition of large forest park areas." He reiterated three great reasons for this enterprise:

- preserve for present and future generations lands of natural scenic beauty situated within easy reach of the multitudes that have access to no other grounds for recreation or summer outings;
- preserve spots having relation to the early settlements of Chicago which are therefore of historical importance; and,
- preserve flora in its primeval state for the sake of the beauty of the forest and for the benefit of those desiring knowledge of the plants indigenous there.

Jensen then followed with a detailed account of the history of Chicago's native landscape and the special significance of each recommended area.

The report was a masterpiece of landscape planning. Based on the then-current beliefs best articulated by landscape architect and planner Frederick Law Olmsted that "rural life has the effect of countering a certain impression of town life," bolstered by exhaustive study of other cities' progress, and steeped in a thorough knowledge of Chicago's native landscape and a passionate hope for the city's future, it opened many eyes. The 3,000 original copies were distributed in a matter of months, yet 12 years would pass before the first acre of land was set aside.

The trouble began in 1905. Foreman's Special Park Commission decided a bill to protect these lands must pass at once, noting how rapidly land values were rising. An Act was thus hastily rammed through the state legislature, one viewed by many supporters as favoring certain political interests at the expense of the overall plan. Incidentally, the term "forest preserve" first appeared in this bill coined not so much to emphasize protecting woods but to avoid accusations of double taxation with existing park districts.

The Special Park Commission and other civic groups opposed this bill, arguing that it would place the administration of the forest preserves in state hands and that there were no provisions for connecting the forest preserves as the original plans had called for.

Nevertheless, Illinois Governor Deneen signed the bill, and it was presented to referendum in November of 1905 where a public favorable to the general idea but unaware of the political machinations behind the bill, passed it. Dismayed, Perkins and his followers prepared to go to court on the grounds that a true majority of voters had not favored the bill. Sensing trouble, Governor Deneen declared the Act inoperative on the advice of his attorney general and refused to appoint the five commissioners required by the Act.

By 1907 the Special Park Commission had prepared its own bill, but this failed to pass due to political infighting. Accordingly in 1909 both houses appointed a "Forest Preserve District and Outer Belt Commission of Illinois" to investigate the entire issue. Perkins and Jensen began their quickly famous "Saturday Afternoon Walking Trips" in which they took this commission, other public leaders, and interested individuals on tours of the proposed system.

The Special Park Commission joined with the Union League Club, the City Club and the Chicago Association of Commerce to form a new and more powerful lobby called the Forest Preserve District Association. This association greatly increased grass roots support and enlisted Daniel Burnham's aid in his now-famous 1909 Plan for Chicago, in which he noted that next in importance to lakefront preservation, "the woodlands should be brought within easy reach of all people, especially the wage earners." All these efforts worked, and a new bill satisfactory to everyone easily passed through the legislature and subsequent referendum. To Perkins, Jensen, and their friends, victory seemed near at hand.

*"...the woodlands should be brought within easy reach of all people, especially the wage earners."*

Again, however, politics intervened. Cook County Board Chairman William Busse appointed the five new commissioners — two Democrats and three Republicans — complying with the law that no more than three could come from one party. But Busse and his Republican administration had lost the recent elections and the Democrats regarded these new appointments as rightfully theirs. The Democrats sued to block Busse's action and, although the Circuit Court of Cook County turned back their efforts, the attorney general (aided by lawyers from the Democratic Party) found the forest preserve legislation unconstitutional. In 1911 the Illinois Supreme Court agreed, noting that only those living in incorporated Chicago and Cicero had been able to vote in the referendum.

With that, the forest preserve movement nearly collapsed. The Forest Preserve District Association disbanded, and the Special Park Commission dropped the issue after seeing more than a decade of precious time, and precious lands, slip away. It remained for Perkins alone and a few hardy followers to press the fight. This he did, and in 1914 new legislation had again received approval from downstate and the voters. Perkins immediately challenged the bill himself to test its constitutionality, raising more than \$2,000 to take the issue before the Circuit and Supreme Courts in 1915 and 1916.

It was an odd spectacle. Perkins' suit charged that his own creation was unconstitutional, simply in order to get that fight out of the way quickly. The court ruled "against" him, confirming the legality of the forest preserves statute.

At that time the native landscape was the focus of a newly-emerging concept: the science of ecology. Its birthplace was the University of Chicago and its founder the botany professor Henry Chandler Cowles. Cowles' pioneering work over several decades established the concept that a native landscape is really a highly-diverse group of plant communities, the "residents" of each community adapted to one another and the community as a whole requiring specific physical factors — water, light, drainage, fire — to survive and thrive. Cowles' work also revealed what has been confirmed ever since: that the Chicago region is one of the most biologically rich areas in America.

Not since the initial settlement of America some 250 years before had a major urban Society been so close to an original, untouched landscape. By Perkins' time an appreciation of regional landscapes had flowered in America. This appreciation was spawned by the emerging fields of city planning and landscape architecture (best exemplified by Olmsted's monumental creation of Central Park in New York in 1856); the growing recognition of the natural wonders discovered in the opening of the American West; and most ominously by the accelerating ability of industrial technology to alter and destroy the landscape through mechanized means.

What Jensen, Perkins, and other supporters saw around them was an original native landscape still largely untouched since its creation by the last glaciers some 12,000 years before. This was a landscape of prairies, marshes, woodlands, and savannas, shaped by Midwestern climate and the regenerating fires periodically started by lightning or Native Americans.

In 1916, the newly formed Forest Preserve District of Cook County floated a \$1,000,000 bond issue and in September of that year purchased its first lands — Deer Grove Forest Preserve. By 1922 the District had purchased 21,500 acres, and was well on its way to exceeding Perkins' original goal of 37,000 acres.

The forest preserve founders clearly sought land for public enjoyment through the many activities we find in the forest preserves today: hiking, cycling, field games, picnics and other pursuits not-then dreamed of. But they sought to provide these activities in an overall landscape preserved as it then existed, and had so for thousands of years. Jensen's vision was perhaps the clearest when he urged the saving of these lands in their "primeval state...for the benefit of those desiring knowledge of the plants indigenous there."

This vision can be seen in the enabling legislation itself which, with words unique in American landscape preservation law, requires the Forest Preserve District to "restore, restock, protect and preserve" these lands "as nearly as may be, in their natural state and condition."

Perkins, Jensen, and others were the first to see the Chicago landscape for what it is: a uniquely Midwestern part of America, as precious as Chicago's social fabric that had taken root in the same ground. Their goal was clear, and presaged the homogenization of America by a century: to preserve for future generations the original native landscape of Chicago, which even then was rapidly disappearing, because it gave strength to a local culture. These founders firmly believed that this landscape was crucial to the spiritual growth of this great Midwestern town, and was an integral part of what makes Chicago a special place to live, work, and play.

Within the first few years, millions of visitors came to the new forest preserves, where the public was allowed to drive or roam at will. People camped in the preserves for months at a time, in some cases making these lands their permanent summer homes.

A police force and regulations were established in 1917.

Sadly, ecology and land management as understood today were in their infancy at the time. Fire in the landscape was feared, and its role in ecology did not become clear until the 1940s through professor John Curtis' pioneering land restoration efforts at the University of Wisconsin. Exotic plant species like buckthorn had yet to arrive, and prolific native trees such as green ash and box elder had yet to expand from their river bottom habitats.

Thus few people noticed the savannas and prairies slowly filling with brush. Few prairies had even been saved to start with. Late in his life, Jensen was asked why this was so. His poignant answer was simple, and harked back decades to when native prairie, like the buffalo, was limitless: "We never thought it would all disappear."

World War II and the ensuing development boom around Chicago left our forest preserves largely forgotten in an era of "hands off" land management. For a time the preserves were even fair game for tollways and other "improvements" of the post-war era. Yet with the arrival of Earth Day and the environmental movement of the 1970s, it was inevitable that a new generation would focus its attention on these landscapes.

Chicago Wilderness is the natural next step in the conservation of a noble heritage.

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