



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 22-0430, **Version:** 1

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### **PROPOSED CONTRACT AMENDMENT**

**Department(s):** Department of Resource Management

**Vendor:** Friends of the Forest Preserves, Chicago, Illinois

**Request:** Authorization for the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Forest Preserves") to extend and increase contract

**Good(s) or Service(s):** Forest Preserve Experience Program

**Original Contract Period:** 1/1/2018 - 12/31/2022

**Proposed Contract Period Extension:** 1/1/2023 - 12/31/2023

**Total Current Contract Amount Authority:** \$1,000,000.00

**Original Approval:** 11/14/2017, \$500,000.00

**Previous Increase(s):** 12/11/2018, \$500,000.00

**This Increase Requested:** Not to exceed \$100,000.00

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** FY 2023, \$100,000.00

**Accounts:** Professional Services 51031.520840; Grant and Mitigation 51010.521444 and 51010.520840; and all future Professional Services accounts

**Contract Number(s):** #74000006695 issued under RFP #17-31-117

#### **Concurrences:**

The Chief Financial Officer has approved this item. Final amendment is subject to legal review and approval.

**District(s):** Districtwide

**Summary:** The Forest Preserves is requesting to add \$100,000.00 in authority and extend the Forest Preserve Experience program through the end of 2023. The proposed extension will allow for continuity of existing professional development programs funded directly by the Forest Preserves and avoid conflict with the simultaneous bidding and deployment of new Conservation Corps programs funded through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). A Request for Proposals (RFP) for ARPA-funded programs is presently being let through the Forest Preserves' public solicitation process and proposed ARPA-funded programs are expected to be presented to the Forest Preserves Board of Commissioners in the

near future. The Forest Preserves then intends to issue a separate RFP seeking proposals for new, longer term Conservation Corps program opportunities which would be funded in-part through the Forest Preserves' annual budget starting in 2024.

Conservation Corps programs are part of the Next Century Conservation Plan and the Expansion Strategy for the Conservation Corps, which defines conservation corps as paid employment that mobilizes people who reflect the diversity of Cook County to maintain and restore the land to ecological health. The Forest Preserve Experience program is a summer employment program for youth whose families are clients of the Housing Authority of Cook County. The program provides conservation and job skills training to high-school youth, ages 15 to 19, from south and west suburban Cook County. The five (5) week program engages approximately one hundred twenty (120) youth participants and twenty-five (25) adult field leaders annually in hands-on ecological restoration activities including, but not limited to, invasive species removal, and shoreline clean-up along the Forest Preserves' many lakes and waterways. Participants receive extensive environmental education and job skills training supplemented by nature-based enrichment activities which promote forest preserve awareness and teaches participants how healthy forest preserves contribute to their community and the quality of life. The Forest Preserve Experience Program is administered by Friends of the Forest Preserves through a contract issued under RFP #17-31-117, which was originally approved by the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners on 11/14/2017 (Board Item No. 17-0388), and subsequently amended on 12/11/2018 (Board Item No. 18-0507) to add funding authority. Conservation Corps programs provide youth and young adult participants with paid environmental education and job skills training within the conservation field, with a focus on ecological restoration in the Forest Preserves.