



Legislation Text

File #: 22-0428, **Version:** 1

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): Palos Conservation Corps Crew

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

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

Total Current Contract Amount Authority: \$825,000.00

Original Approval: 11/14/2017, \$750,000.00

Previous Increase(s): 4/5/2022, \$75,000.00

This Increase Requested: Not to exceed \$225,000.00

Estimated Fiscal Impact: FY 2023, \$225,000.00

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

Contract Number(s): #74000002912 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): 17

Summary: The Forest Preserves is requesting to add \$225,000.00 in authority and extend the Palos Conservation Corps Crew 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 Palos Conservation Corps engages up to four (4) participants, one (1) Crew Manager, and one (1) Assistant Crew Manager in hands-on ecological restoration work to restore habitat in the Palos region. Highly skilled participants contribute to herbaceous and woody invasive species control, prescribed burn, and native seed collection activities. Additionally, the Palos Conservation Corps hosts volunteer workdays in partnership with the local site stewards to bolster volunteer recruitment and engagement in the region. The Palos Conservation Corps 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. 17-0390), and subsequently amended on 4/5/2022 (Board Item No. 22-0206) 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.