



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 24-0092, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED GRANT AWARD

**Department:** Department of Resource Management

**Grantee:** Forest Preserves of Cook County (the “Forest Preserves”)

**Grantor:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**Request:** Authorization to accept grant and permit the General Superintendent authority to execute the grant agreement on behalf of the President of the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners.

**Purpose:** Authorization is sought for the Forest Preserves to accept grant and enter into a grant agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to restore and enhance 63.4 acres of habitat and support a variety of community engagement activities at Bemis Woods.

**Grant Amount:** \$125,000.00

**Grant Period:** 1/1/2024 (retroactive) - 8/31/2026

**Fiscal Impact:** Not to exceed \$126,000.00 in direct match, which includes approximately \$1,000.00 of in-kind support for the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the project.

**Accounts:** Professional Services 51033.520840; Grant and Mitigation 51010.521444 and 51010.520840; and all future Professional Services and Grant and Mitigation accounts

**Concurrences:** The Chief Financial Officer has approved this item. Final agreement is subject to legal review and approval.

**District(s):** 17

**Summary:** The Forest Preserves has been awarded federal grant funds from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (#F23AC02164-00) through the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative in support of habitat restoration and collaborative community engagement activities at Bemis Woods in central Cook County. Restoration activities will include 63.4 acres of invasive brush removal and tree thinning to promote native oak regeneration and open migratory corridors along Salt Creek. The project will also feature collaborative partnerships with local stewardship volunteers, the Chicago Bird Alliance (formerly known as the Chicago Audubon Society), and the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum to host public engagement programs including seed collection workdays, bird/bat/frog monitoring, and ten (10) educational birding walks.

Bemis Woods, located near the Village of Western Springs, contains an assemblage of woodland and floodplain forest

interspersed with scattered wetlands supporting regionally important wildlife, plants, and pollinators. This project advances the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan and the Natural and Cultural Resources Master Plan, which identified the Salt Creek preserves, including Bemis Woods, as the sixth-highest priority landscape for conservation and ecological restoration.

Total project costs are \$251,000.00, of which the Forest Preserves will contribute \$126,000.00 or approximately 50% in direct match.