



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-0389, **Version:** 1

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### PROPOSED CONTRACT

**Department(s):** Resource Management

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

**Request:** Authorization for the Forest Preserve District of Cook County to enter into and execute

**Good(s) or Service(s):** Roving Crew Conservation Corps Program

**Contract Value:** Not to exceed \$150,000.00 per year, or \$750,000.00 over the five (5) year term

**Contract period:** 1/1/2018 - 12/31/2022

**Estimated Fiscal Impact:** FY 2018 \$150,000.00, FY 2019 \$150,000.00, FY 2020 \$150,000.00, FY 2021 \$150,000.00, FY 2022 \$150,000.00

**Accounts:** Intern Programs 51009.521525, Habitat Enhancement 51009.521452, Habitat Restoration 51009.521444, Grant and Mitigation Accounts: 51010.29982 and 51010.22522

**Contract Number(s):** 17-31-117

#### Concurrences:

The Chief Financial Officer and Chief Attorney have approved this item.

**District(s):** Districtwide

**Summary:** Contract 17-31-117 consists of a variety of Conservation Corps internship programs focused on ecological restoration throughout the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Preserves"). The Conservation Corps co-facilitates innovative job training and employment programs that provide participants with paid, hands-on experiences in conservation that train the next generation to restore and be responsible stewards of the land. The Preserves issued a Request for Proposals, and received a total of nine (9) proposals from three (3) vendors for this project.

The Preserves assembled a review panel consisting of various Preserve staff that considered Friends of the Forest Preserves' proposal one of the most responsive including particular strengths in experience, match contribution, program scalability, and performance capacity as it relates to the work requested in the proposal. The Roving Crew program provides advanced conservation and leadership skills training with a focus on engaging young adults, ages 18-24. The twelve (12) month program engages four (4) participants, one (1) crew manager, and one (1) assistant crew manager in hands-on ecological restoration activities centered around invasive species control and restoration of native plants. Participants receive training in prescribed fire, herbicide application, stewardship, and chainsaw operation, in addition to experience leading various community engagement and volunteer workday events promoting forest preserve awareness.

The Preserves believe it is critical to engage individuals from Cook County's diverse communities in conservation jobs at the Preserves. Conservation Corps programs have been very successful in engaging participants from a wide range of

socioeconomic backgrounds, ages and ethnicities. Corps demographic data from 2007 to 2016 show that on average 54% of participants were African American, 23% Caucasian, 18% Latino, 3% biracial, and 2% Asian.

Total project costs are \$247,000.00 annually, with \$75,000.00 in investment by the Preserves leveraging \$172,000.00 in partner match. The overall annual contract authority was increased in anticipation of additional funding opportunities. This program advances the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan.