



Legislation Text

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REPORT

Department: Office of the General Superintendent

Request: Approve

Report Title: Position Paper - Scaling Up Volunteers in the Forest Preserves of Cook County

Report Period: N/A

Summary: This position paper by the Conservation and Policy Council of the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the “Council”) provides guidance related to increasing the number of volunteers throughout Cook County, engaged in supporting the Forest Preserves mission.

The Next Century Conservation Plan (the “NCCP”) established a goal of restoring 30,000 acres over 25 years. Accomplishment of this inspiring goal well positions the Forest Preserves to address the threats that climate change, biodiversity loss and limited access to nature pose to people’s well-being. To attain the ambitious goal of the NCCP, the Council recommends that the Forest Preserves and its partners invest in the best available strategies to engage, train, inspire and retain dedicated volunteers and, especially, volunteer leaders. The Council also recommends developing a volunteer recruitment strategy consistent with the recommendations of the Racial Equity Diversity and Inclusion position paper (Agenda Item 20-0285).

Upon approval of the position paper by the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners, the Forest Preserves shall take steps to implement the recommendations in the paper.

The Council thanks the following for their assistance developing this paper: Jane Balaban (North Branch Volunteer Steward and position paper committee Co-chair), Wendy Paulson (former Council Chair and position paper committee Co-chair), Sylvia Jenkins (Council Member), Radhika Miraglia (Friends of the Forest Preserves), Daniel Suarez (Audubon Great Lakes), Cathy Geraghty (Forest Preserves), Joanna Huyck (Forest Preserves), and Nicole Pierson (Forest Preserves).