



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0165, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING LAURA RERICHA-ANCHOR ON THE PUBLICATION OF *FLORA OF THE CHICAGO REGION: A FLORISTIC AND ECOLOGICAL SYNTHESIS*

WHEREAS, the Preserves' nearly 70,000 acres of natural lands are home to some of the nation's most biologically diverse flora and fauna, inspiring a wide array of scientists and students to better understand the natural world; and

WHEREAS, Laura Rericha-Anchor is a wildlife biologist with the Forest Preserves of Cook County's Resource Management Department, where she has worked since 1997 to protect and preserve the plants and animals of the forest preserves; and

WHEREAS, in the course of her duties Laura explores, researches, and documents the plants and animals of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, significantly contributing to the Preserves' restoration efforts, and the health of the region's plant and animal communities; and

WHEREAS, Laura's observations of the natural world have advanced - and continue to advance - our understanding of how to better preserve and protect the Preserves; and

WHEREAS, Laura has worked in partnership with co-author Dr. Gerould Wilhelm, Director of Research at The Conservation Institute to produce the *Flora of the Chicago Region: A Floristic and Ecological Synthesis*, a groundbreaking book that celebrates our region's biodiversity. The publication details 3,149 plant species and documents the delicate, yet powerful world of plants, their pollinators, and their environment; and

WHEREAS, this publication was inspired by a book originally published in 1969 by Floyd Swink, a renowned taxonomist and beloved naturalist who delighted in sharing his knowledge of the Midwest's remarkable flora and fauna, and mentored both Laura and Dr. Wilhelm; and

WHEREAS, during the course of their fieldwork Laura and Dr. Wilhelm discovered a new plant species which they named *Hypericum swinkianum* (or Swink's St. John's Wort) in honor of Floyd Swink; and

WHEREAS, *Flora of the Chicago Region* is significant for its breadth and depth, including 619 more species than its predecessor, clearly defining plant communities, updating nomenclature, and identifying what makes our plant communities so unique. This book will be used by national and regional agencies and institutions to determine the quality of natural areas and serves as a model for other regions; and

WHEREAS, *Flora of the Chicago Region* significantly adds to the current body of scientific knowledge, enabling both the professional and amateur botanist to better understand our region's plants and insects; and

WHEREAS, Laura has spent more than 50,000 hours over the last 15 years to co-author this book, and the Preserves is proud to have supported her in this scientific endeavor; and

WHEREAS, Laura and Dr. Wilhelm have created a book whose beautiful illustrations and informative 1,371 pages provide an encyclopedic listing of our region's remarkable flora; and

WHEREAS, this book will inspire people to take a closer look at the intricate natural world around them, more deeply appreciate this region's natural heritage, and to consider what each of us can do to heal the environment; and

WHEREAS, Laura has contributed significantly to the field of botany and to advancing the mission of the Preserves, and is a deeply valued employee of the Forest Preserves and the region's conservation community.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cook County Board of Commissioners and General Superintendent Arnold Randall do hereby recognize Laura Rericha-Anchor's significant contribution to science; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this Resolution be spread upon the permanent Record of Proceedings of the Board of Commissioners of the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, and that a suitable copy of this resolution be presented to Laura Rericha-Anchor to commemorate her significant achievement and as a token of appreciation for her service to the Forest Preserves and the residents of Cook County.