



Legislation Text

File #: 17-0387, **Version:** 1

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): Career Immersion Internship Program

Contract Value: Not to exceed \$200,000.00 per year, or \$1,000,000.00 over the five (5) year term

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

Estimated Fiscal Impact: FY 2018 \$200,000.00, FY 2019 \$200,000.00, FY 2020 \$200,000.00, FY 2021 \$200,000.00, FY 2022 \$200,000.00

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, program scalability, and performance capacity as it relates to the work requested in the proposal. The Career Immersion Program gives approximately twelve (12) adult participants the opportunity to work alongside Forest Preserve staff fisheries biologists, wildlife biologists, and resource management forestry and trails crews. Participants receive important resource management skills and leadership development training, while exploring various career opportunities in conservation.

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.

This program advances the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan.