



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 18-0313, **Version:** 2

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### **PROPOSED RESOLUTION**

#### **ADOPTION OF THE SUSTAINABILITY & CLIMATE RESILIENCY PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, over one hundred years ago, visionary leaders had the foresight to create the Forest Preserves of Cook County (hereafter the “Forest Preserves”) with the mission “to acquire, restore and manage lands for the purpose of protecting and preserving public open space”; and

**WHEREAS**, Illinois has experienced a one-degree Fahrenheit increase in average annual temperature since the beginning of the 20th Century; and

**WHEREAS**, recent climate projections published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and other scientific organizations, predict that if global emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise, historically unprecedented warming is anticipated in the Midwest region in the next few decades; and

**WHEREAS**, along with a projected rise in annual temperatures, studies also project that the Midwest region likely will experience increased events of extreme precipitation during winter and spring, and intense summer droughts; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forest Preserves is one of the most important assets of Cook County, and ensuring that its lands, along with its associated ecosystems and wildlife, thrive in the coming century is critical to the success of our entire region; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forest Preserves’ mission drives it to consider the impacts of a changing climate on its own lands, on the communities of which the Forest Preserves is a part, and the planet; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan was developed to harness the various strengths within the Forest Preserves to address the pressing environmental issues of our time, such as climate change, pollution, invasive species, and habitat loss and fragmentation, all of which are threatening the health of our natural spaces; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan was created by the University of Illinois Prairie Research Institute at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center, along with the support and collaboration of key stakeholders, content experts, climate experts, and Forest Preserves staff; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forest Preserves believes that integrating sustainable practices across all operations, going above and beyond direct environmental stewardship, is fundamental to fulfilling our mission and directly advances the work described in the Forest Preserves’ Next Century Conservation Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forest Preserves is dedicated to implementing responsible practices to mitigate environmental stressors; and

**WHEREAS**, the Forest Preserves commits to ensuring that our native landscapes, home to a remarkable diversity of plant and animal life, continue to thrive for generations to come; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan calls for the Forest Preserves to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 80% by the year 2050; and

**WHEREAS**, the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan also calls for the Forest Preserves to implement a roadmap that will allow the Forest Preserves to be resilient in a changing climate; and

**WHEREAS**, in 32 years, with the successful implementation of the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan, the Forest Preserves aims to have thousands of acres of healthy savannas, woodlands, wetlands, and prairies filled with thriving native plants and animals; and

**WHEREAS**, visionary and innovative leadership will successfully manage one of the world's largest metropolitan nature preserves in a sustainable and environmentally conscious manner.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the President and the Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners do hereby adopt the Sustainability & Climate Resiliency Plan.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the President and Forest Preserve Board of Commissioners extend their appreciation to the University of Illinois Prairie Research Institute at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Center for their contributions to the plan.