



Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

HONORING THE FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY'S DEER GROVE WEST WETLAND AND WOODLAND NATURE PRESERVE FOR RECEIVING A CHICAGO WILDERNESS EXCELLENCE IN ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AWARD, AND THE FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY'S CONSERVATION CORPS AND *FLORA OF THE CHICAGO REGION* FOR EACH RECEIVING A CHICAGO WILDERNESS FORCE OF NATURE AWARD

WHEREAS, on November 14, 2019, the Forest Preserves of Cook County's Deer Grove West Wetland and Woodland Nature Preserve was honored with a Platinum Accreditation, the highest accreditation possible, from the Chicago Wilderness Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program and the Forest Preserves' Conservation Corps and the publication *Flora of the Chicago Region* by Gerould Wilhelm and Laura Rericha were both honored with a Chicago Wilderness George B. Rabb Force of Nature Award at a ceremony at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe, Illinois; and

WHEREAS, the Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program recognizes the organizations managing the largest and highest-quality natural areas in the Chicago region and highlights projects that set an example of best practices in natural resource management and ecological restoration; and

WHEREAS, the 240-acre project area that received Platinum Accreditation is part of the 1,950-acre Deer Grove West Wetland and Woodland Nature Preserve located in Palatine, Illinois that supports savanna, dry-mesic upland forest, mesic upland forest, wet floodplain forest, sedge meadow and wetland communities that collectively provide habitat for hundreds of native plant and animal species; and

WHEREAS, Deer Grove Natural Areas Volunteers began restoration work at the site over 20 years ago, and in 2015 the Forest Preserves and Openlands expanded on this work through O'Hare Modernization Mitigation Account funding to remove invasive species, maintain the ecological health of existing habitat and restore hydrology to the site's wetland habitat; and

WHEREAS, today Deer Grove West Wetland and Woodland Nature Preserve is one of our region's best examples of places that benefit both wildlife and people; and

WHEREAS, the George B. Rabb Force of Nature Awards recognize individuals and organizations whose conservation, restoration, advocacy or educational activities in the region are inspirational examples for others; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Corps was developed to mobilize people to restore nature to health, and to train the next generation of conservation leaders and forest preserve advocates by providing youth and adults with paid, hands-on restoration experiences on the Forest Preserves' nearly 70,000 acres of public land; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Corps is coordinated in partnership with the Friends of the Forest Preserves, Student Conservation Association, Greencorps Chicago, and Audubon Great Lakes; and

WHEREAS, the Conservation Corps is a Force of Nature because it strives to break down geographic and racial barriers by creating a network where people of all backgrounds work together for a common cause and ensures that participants gain an understanding of local ecology and are empowered to become nature ambassadors within their communities and

among their peers; and

WHEREAS, *Flora of the Chicago Region: A Floristic and Ecological Synthesis* by Gerould Wilhelm and Laura Rericha is the latest edition of Plants of the Chicago Region, a compendium of the Chicago region's vascular flora first authored by Floyd Swink in 1969; and

WHEREAS, this completely revised edition breaks new ground by documenting the relationship between flora and fauna, describing the habitats in which plants and their ecological counterparts occur, and noting the impacts of climate change and consequent habitat degradation; and

WHEREAS, few other regions within the United States have such a thorough resource available to them and the Chicago Wilderness area is fortunate to have such a guide to the natural world; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Toni Preckwinkle, President; and the Forest Preserves of Cook County Board of Commissioners thank and congratulate the winners of both the Chicago Wilderness Excellence in Ecological Restoration Award and George B. Rabb Force of Nature Award and thank them for their commitment to the mission of the Forest Preserves; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this Resolution be presented to the awardees as a token of appreciation for their service to the Forest Preserves of Cook County and the residents of Cook County.