



Legislation Text

File #: 24-0471, **Version:** 1

PROPOSED CONTRACT AMENDMENT

Department(s): Department of Resource Management

Vendor: Student Conservation Association, Inc., Chicago, Illinois

Request: Authorization for the Forest Preserves of Cook County (the "Forest Preserves") to extend and increase contract

Good(s) or Service(s): Chicago Conservation Corps young adult gap year program

Original Contract Period: 1/1/2023 - 12/31/2024

Proposed Contract Period Extension: 1/1/2025 - 12/31/2026

Total Current Contract Amount Authority: \$465,000.00 (\$415,000.00 grant funding received through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 ("ARPA"), plus up to \$50,000.00 contingency)

Original Approval: 12/13/2022, \$465,000.00

Previous Increase(s): N/A

This Increase Requested: Not to exceed \$176,939.00 (to be fully funded by additional ARPA grant funding)

Estimated Fiscal Impact: FY 2025 \$50,000.00 (unexpended contingency, per original approval)

Accounts: ARPA Conservation Corps 51032.521444; Professional Services 51034.520840; and all future Professional Services accounts

Contract Number(s): #74000011523 issued under RFP #22-31-116

Concurrences: The Chief Financial Officer has approved this item. Final amendment is subject to legal review and approval.

The contract-specific Minority- and Women-Owned Business Enterprise goal for this contract was set to zero.

District(s): Districtwide

Summary: On June 11, 2024, the Forest Preserves Board of Commissioners approved the receipt of \$562,833.00 in additional American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 grant funding (Board Item No. 24-0245) to expand Conservation Corps job

training and employment programs through 2025. As such, the three (3) contracts for Conservation Corps service providers awarded to fulfill the ARPA requirements (Board Item Nos. 22-0524, 22-0525, and 22-0526) must now subsequently be amended to extend each contract, and increase the authority awarded to each vendor due to the allocation of these new funds. These programs were solicited via a public Request for Proposal (RFP) process in 2022.

The Student Conservation Association's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of the environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land. In 2025, this program will engage approximately seven (7) young adult participants annually in hands-on conservation activities including, but not limited to, invasive species removal, assistance with prescribed burns, and seed collecting along with exploration of conservation careers and post-secondary education opportunities in environmental fields. This program serves as a critical steppingstone program for young adults ages 18 to 23 years who have successfully graduated from conservation corps high school programs and who are not currently pursuing full-time secondary education. There is a recognized lack of conservation programs for this demographic and this program serves to help address this challenge of supporting young adults who are interested in conservation as a possible career path.

Total program costs including this additional contribution are not to exceed \$641,939.00, of which the Forest Preserves previously requested and was granted authority to add up to \$50,000.00 of direct match to allow for additional flexibility, if needed. An additional year (2026) was added to the contract in case additional funding becomes available. Conservation Corps programs advance the goals of the Next Century Conservation Plan by mobilizing people to heal and nurture the lands through a paid conservation corps model.